A Chronicle of Kingship

1066—1937

GEORGE VI.

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A Chronicle of Kingship

1066—1937

By

R. B. Mowat

and

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Dynastic Tables designed by
Cecile M. Driffield

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Preface

A CORONATION is a fitting occasion for a review of Kingship. The story of our Kings and Queens has often been told, but every historian has his own peculiar point of view to put forward, and his presentation of historical data reflects something of his own personality. In this book, therefore, we have tried to portray the lives and achievements of our Kings and Queens against the colourful background of national and international affairs. Considerations of space have of necessity restricted our opportunities for expanding the story, but we trust that it still retains that quality of coherence which the general reader of history rightly admires, and that it presents in their proper historical perspective the events in the lives of the Kings and Queens who have ruled in England between 1066 and the present day.

We are happy to acknowledge our debt to the Reverend Thomas Davies of Trelech and Mr W. R. Smale of Radley College for reading the proofs; to Miss Cecile M. Driffield for supervising the making of the Index and designing (as we think) the very attractive Genealogical Tables; and to our friend and publisher, Mr Arthur Barker, for his patience in dealing with the many problems of production.

R. B. M.
J. D. G. D.

1937.

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PART I

MEDIÆVAL KINGSHIP

(1066–1485)

CHAPTER I

THE NORMANS

William I., *the Conqueror* :	1066–1087
William II., *Rufus* :	1087–1100
Henry I., *Beauclerc* :	1100–1135
Stephen *of Boulogne* :	1135–1154

THE RISE OF the Norman duchy is one of the outstanding facts in the history of tenth-century Europe. Its founder was the Scandinavian jarl Rollo who in 911 seized upon, and settled his uncouth followers in, the district lying about Rouen. As became conquerors they lorded it over the Romano-Gallic inhabitants whose churches and homes they ruthlessly pillaged and burnt ; but the Roman imperial tradition was too deep-seated for these newcomers to eradicate, and within a hundred years it had them in its toils, and under the name of Normans they paraded over the European scene as the most zealous champions of the Latin culture.

These Normans were essentially imitators, but it was characteristic of them that they imitated only that which was worthy of imitation ; and when they accepted the customs and institutions of the peoples whom they conquered they had a wonderful *flair* for adapting them to meet their own requirements. They were clear-headed and logical in their outlook on life ; and blessed with a tireless energy they prosecuted a cause until it triumphed. Not over-scrupulous in their dealings with each other they nevertheless professed a great respect for legality, and not only were they meticulous in making all their actions take on a complexion of legality, even to the extent of having to stretch to the utmost limits accepted standards of right, but they found it the easiest thing in the world to make a virtue of necessity. They were a passionate race of men : they drank hard and loved shamelessly ; and they were often guilty of the most senseless cruelties. But they seldom allowed their excesses to interfere with their business, and in their dealings with their adversaries they tempered cruelty with a curiously inconsistent clemency. Holy Church rejoiced in the unqualified allegiance of these Normans. They were unwavering upholders of orthodoxy, and were ever ready to lend their swords for the extirpation of heresy ; and were splendid patrons of learning.

emphasised above all other things personal freedom. Lacking the logical outlook of the Normans, they often allowed ideals to obscure realities. In battle they fought with a grim ferocity which helped in some measure to make good deficiencies of leadership and equipment; and if they neither asked from, nor gave quarter to, their enemies they knew none of the Norman refinements of cruelty, and were more consistently clement than the people of the duchy. It would be idle to suggest that these Anglo-Saxons were strictly speaking a religious people, or that they gave great encouragement to learning; but religion was at least accepted cheerfully as a necessary ingredient of life, and scholars were assured of a hospitable reception in England.

Anglo-Saxon England experienced a subtle Norman Conquest during the reign of Edward Confessor (1042–1066). Brought up in the ducal court of Normandy, this saintly monarch had not only assimilated, but also had a sincere affection for Norman ideas and customs; and it was natural enough that he should seek to introduce them into England when he was called upon to rule over the land. Normans thronged his court, and were insinuated into English life, receiving lands or benefices. Anglo-Saxon insularity reacted against this Normanisation, and the nationalist cause was ably championed by Godwine, the first subject of the kingdom, and his warlike sons. This was but the prelude to a more lasting and deadlier struggle, which was only terminated when Norman and Anglo-Saxon were merged into one people.

IN THE SPRING of 1027 there rode towards Falaise a handsome youth of eighteen: he was Robert, Count of the Hiemois, the son of Richard I., Duke of Normandy. As he rode up to the town he saw a young girl, according to one account, washing the family linen in a little prill, according to another, dancing in the fields. She was Arlette, the daughter of a simple tanner of Falaise. The young count sent for her, and she was attached to his household: nine months later she bore him a sturdy son. By his father the baby was named William; by the proud barons of Normandy *the Bastard*; and by his contemporaries he was known to the end of his life as William *the Bastard*.

When the baby was less than a year old his father became Duke of Normandy, and, as it happened, initiated one of the most brilliant periods in the duchy's history. Duke Robert, called both *the Magnificent* and *the Devil*, ruled his reckless vassals with a heavy hand; he checked the acquisitiveness of turbulent neighbours, and gave Normandy peace and prosperity. In 1034, however, he decided to go on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and at a great council of his barons at Fécamp named William as his heir. The barons murmured dangerously. To entrust the fortunes of the duchy to the care of a seven-years-old boy seemed to some an act of political madness: to foist upon a proud people a bastard was regarded by others as a gross insult. But Robert was not to be

put off by their dark looks and muttered resentment: he was determined that nothing should interfere with his plans. He appointed as his little son's guardians Alan, Count of Brittany, Gilbert, Count of Brionne, Osbern, Seneschal of Normandy, and Thorold or Thurcytel de Neufmarché; and his suzerain, Henry I. of France, promised that no harm should come to the lad during his father's absence in the Holy Land.

On 2nd July 1035 Duke Robert died at Nicea on his way home, and when the news was told in Normandy treachery immediately reared up her ugly head against the boy duke. Within five years assassins had struck down the four guardians; and once at Vaudreuil, where the faithful Osbern was done to death, William himself nearly fell into his enemies' hands. He was too young and helpless to oppose the Norman barons when they compelled him to take as his guardian the very man who had struck down Gilbert de Brionne—Ralf de Wacy, the son of Archbishop Robert of Rouen and a cousin of the dead Duke Robert; and it was in an atmosphere charged with treachery and suspicion that the future conqueror of Anglo-Saxon England spent his early life.

The details of those early years are tantalisingly meagre, and we have to content ourselves with fleeting glimpses of his youthful activities. At fifteen he is made to preside over the church council which accepted for Normandy the *treuga Dei* or *truce of God*—the mediæval attempt to humanise war. Five years later he is brought face to face with the first real crisis in his career. His cousin and playmate of boyhood days, Guy de Brionne, headed a conspiracy against his rule, and in a short time inflamed the baronage of the Cotentin and Bessin against "the degenerate bastard." William, unaware of the danger, was hunting at Valognes in the heart of the disaffected country, and had it not been for the shrewdness of his jester his enemies would have taken him there. In his extremity he appealed for help to Henry of France. Side by side they marched against the rebels, and at Val-ès-dunes, Guy de Brionne and his friends were completely overthrown. At twenty years of age William became the undisputed master of his duchy.

His difficulties were by no means over. One moment he is faced with treason in his own family: at another he is made conscious that his suzerain, jealous of his growing power, is working to undermine the ducal authority within Normandy itself. But courage and wisdom enabled William to triumph over his enemies, and he struck hard against all who dared to oppose his authority. Twice he shattered the armies of the French king—at Montemer in 1054 and Varaville in 1058; and his lawless subjects and neighbours took these stern lessons to heart. A bastard he might be, but he was a man of action, who gave as good as—and often better than—he got; and during the thirteen years following his victory at Val-ès-dunes he securely laid the foundations of his rule in Normandy.

He found time, however, to visit his pious English cousin, Edward Confessor (1051). "Earl William," recorded an English chronicler, "came from over the sea with a great company of Frenchmen, and the king received him and as many of his companions as pleased him and let them go again." It is not improbable that the childless Edward promised his Norman cousin the English crown after his own death: contemporary Norman writers maintained that such a promise was made.

Two years after his visit to England William married Matilda, the daughter of Baldwin Count of Flanders. It was a courageous thing to do, for in 1049 a church council at Rheims had—for some reason which is now obscure—prohibited the union, and good churchmen were therefore scandalised by William's defiance of ecclesiastical authority. His uncle Malger, Archbishop of Rouen, excommunicated him, although he had a "wife" installed in his archiepiscopal palace; and even Lanfranc, the scholarly Prior of Bec, who was already in William's confidence, spoke boldly against the marriage. In the end it was Lanfranc who pleaded the young couple's cause at the Roman *curia*; and in 1059 Pope Nicholas II. raised the Church's ban on condition that William and Matilda would each build and endow an abbey as penance for their disobedience.

Fortune smiled upon William. In 1060 death carried off his most formidable enemies—Henry of France and Geoffrey Martel, Count of Anjou. His new suzerain, Philip I., was a boy, and being under the guardianship of William's father-in-law, Baldwin of Flanders, there was little to be feared from that quarter. The death of Geoffrey Martel left the Norman duke free to assert his claim to the county of Maine, which lay between Normandy and Anjou, and by 1063 he had achieved his purpose. In the following year came the Breton war, and once again he checked a turbulent neighbour, Conan of Brittany. The English earl Harold Godwineson fought at William's side during this campaign. Shipwrecked on the coast of Ponthieu he was held to ransom by Guy, the count of that county; but William was Guy's overlord, and he demanded that Harold should be sent to the Norman court. The tale how Harold was made to swear over the most sacred relics of Normandy to support William's claim to the English throne on the Confessor's death may be true in substance, and it is improbable that the English earl acted as reluctantly as his fellow-countrymen subsequently tried to make out; and there is a strong tradition that he returned to England pledged to marry one of William's daughters and to support his future father-in-law's claim to the English throne. From Harold's point of view such an arrangement assured him of the position of *first subject* in the kingdom.

In January 1066 as William was about to set out on a hunting trip in the woods near Rouen messengers brought him the news that Harold had been elected King of England. William fitzOsbern, son of the Osbern who was

Vertue.

Reproduced by Courtesy of the British Museum.

WILLIAM I.

assassinated in the ducal chamber at Vaudreuil, urged his lord to assert his claim without delay. Messengers were thereupon sent to England to remind Harold of his promises to William; but they returned with the reply that kingship in England was elective, and that the action of the Witanagemot had abrogated Harold's promises. The barons of Normandy were summoned to Lillebonne to discuss the matter: at the same time an emissary was sent to Rome to obtain papal approval for an expedition against the English.

At the outset neither the papal authorities nor the Norman barons favoured the war. But in Rome William had a good friend in Archdeacon Hildebrand. Was not the Church in England ruled by a schismatic—Stigand? Was not religion shamefully neglected in the island? These were the questions which Hildebrand posed; and the answers which he supplied secured for William the right to call his invasion of England a crusade. His emissary returned with a relic of St Peter and a banner specially blessed by Pope Alexander II. The baronial council at Lillebonne was a fiasco, and William was driven to make personal approaches for support to individual barons. In May he was visited by Harold's brother Tostig, who promised to lead a Scandinavian force into England in William's interest. Then Conan of Brittany died: he was the one man who might have kept William at home, for the Norman duke feared that in his absence the Breton might try to attack Normandy.

Throughout the summer months the work of preparation for the invasion proceeded apace. Knights from the various French fiefs rode in to offer their services on the advertised conditions—grants of lands in England if the venture were successful; and a great fleet of ships was assembled at the mouth of the Dive. In mid-September the ships moved to St Valéry-en-Caux, the rendezvous for the embarkation; and on the 27th the expedition sailed before a southerly wind towards the English shore. William himself in the *Mora* with her great chequered sail led the armada, and early next morning the leading ships were run aground on the beach near Pevensey. The invaders met with no resistance. Harold was away in the north: only three days before he had fought and won a desperate battle at Stamford Bridge against Tostig and his Scandinavian friends. But on the news of William's landing he hastened south to defend his kingdom, and on 13th October his army went into position on the hill of Senlac overlooking Hastings which William had now made his headquarters. There is no space to describe the terrible struggle which raged on the slopes of that hill throughout the following day: sufficient must it be to say that in the end William's superior leadership told, and that when evening came Harold was a mangled corpse on the field and his army shattered.

England, however, was not yet conquered. In London the Witanagemot met and elected Edgar Atheling as king, and in the Midlands were the powerful levies of the two great English earls, Edwine and Morkere. But these men

lacked Harold's fine courage and leadership, and they stood idly by while William slowly encircled London, moving from Dover by way of Canterbury to Southwark, and then crossing the Thames as high up as Wallingford. The Atheling, Archbishop Aldred of York, and other notables met him at Berkhampstead formally to make their submission; and at another meeting of the Witanagemot he was elected king. His coronation on Christmas Day was marred by an unfortunate incident. When the Londoners who crowded about the doors of the abbey church of Westminster shouted their acclamation the Norman soldiery thought that an attack was about to be made on them, and to create a diversion they fired some of the houses in the vicinity. The congregation poured out to see what all the fuss was about, and William was crowned in an almost empty church, only the officiating clergy remaining with him.

During the weeks immediately following the coronation Barking was his headquarters. There he received the submission of Edwine, Morkere, Waltheof, Copsige, and many other members of the native aristocracy: there was begun the reorganisation of the kingdom which he had so newly won. The lands of those who had fought at Senlac were confiscated and parcelled out among the conquerors; and even those who had not resisted the invasion were compelled to pay heavy fines for the privilege of retaining their estates. In this way an alien aristocracy secured a stranglehold over Anglo-Saxon England, and the new king obtained the money required for the work of government.

The arrogance of the newcomers quickly aroused the resentment of the English, and in 1067 the first sparks of revolt were kindled. In Kent the champion of the native cause was the Norman Eustace of Boulogne; in the country about Hereford, Eadric the Wild leagued himself with the Welsh to harass the Norman settlers; in the south-west Harold's sons raised the countryside against William. In 1068 Edwine and Morkere declared for Edgar Atheling; and Waltheof carried the flames of revolt through the northern shires. Danish aid was forthcoming in the following year, and the success of the rebels in the north, where they had expelled Norman garrisons from Durham and York, tempted others to join the movement. And in the inaccessible Fen country a strange leader, Hereward the Wake, had won the people of that district over to his side.

Calmly William faced the ugly situation: instead of attempting to crush the risings as a whole he adopted the wiser policy of dealing with each in turn. Hurling himself into the West Country he quickly pacified the disaffected districts, and drove Harold's sons out of the country; and then moving rapidly northwards he struck at the heart of the rebellion. Mercilessly he harried the land between York and Durham, burning the people's homes and devastating their fields (1069); and the effect of his ruthlessness was still a reality twenty

years later when the commissioners entrusted with the compilation of the Domesday survey visited the district. *Hoc est wasta* was the entry which they were compelled to make on their scrolls as they progressed from York to Durham. The north terrorised into submission, William next turned his attention to the disaffection in the country south of Chester. In the depth of winter he crossed the Pennines: by his splendid example he shamed his faint-hearted men into following him over snow-covered tracks, and on the march he lived as one of them. Once again the sparks of revolt were stamped out and the lands of the rebels shamelessly harried. William had taught his English subjects a lesson which they were not likely to forget, and had reduced the risks of a native uprising against his rule.

On the Continent land was regarded as the basis of military service: in other words, an estate represented so many armed men. A great continental landlord therefore had at call a considerable armed force which he could, and regularly did, use as he thought fit; and the result of this arrangement was anarchy and private war. William was determined that England should never know the continental system of feudalism; and he established the salutary rule that all tenants, whether holding lands directly of him (tenants-in-chief) or of his tenants-in-chief (tenants-in-mesne), owed the king an unqualified allegiance. With this object in view he saw to it that the lands granted by way of rewards to his followers were scattered up and down the country, and not concentrated in any one district; and in 1086 at a great *gemot* at Salisbury he required all military tenants, whether holding directly or indirectly of him, to swear a solemn oath of allegiance to the crown. In England there were ready to hand means to circumscribe these feudal privileges within narrower limits than was the custom on the continent. The ancient Anglo-Saxon courts of shire and hundred were admirably suited to check the influence of local magnates, and by a careful appointment of sheriffs the king was able to place in every shire an officer who would watch over the royal interests.

This new arrangement was not acceptable to the men who had accompanied William to England. In 1075 he was confronted with a serious outbreak of baronial resentment. Ralph Guader, Earl of Norfolk, was infuriated because William had forbidden him to marry the sister of Roger de Breteuil, Earl of Hereford; and taking advantage of the king's absence in Normandy and winning Waltheof over to their side the two earls took up arms to defy the king. But the native English rallied immediately to the Government's support: in nine years they had learnt that no matter how harsh the rule of William might be it was to be preferred to the baronial lawlessness for which Norfolk and Hereford were fighting; and this connection between the central government and the native English was an important factor in the policy of the Norman kings as it affected their relations with their barons. It was not a banned

marriage which had occasioned this "Bridal of Norwich," as the revolt of the earls was called: it was the realisation that checks were to be imposed upon baronial prerogatives. Norfolk escaped to Brittany; Hereford was imprisoned; Waltheof, who told Lanfranc of the plot and actually was not as seriously implicated as the two earls, was beheaded.

Barons resentful of their treatment in England could easily retire to their Norman estates to stir up trouble in the duchy or to join any movement against the imperious William. Thus when Robert rebelled against his father in 1078 he was immediately joined by a number of barons who held lands in England. The plot failed, and Robert and his companions thereupon sought and obtained the assistance of the French king. Beneath the walls of the castle at Gerberoi in 1080 William and Robert met in combat, and the son unhorsed his father and wounded him in the hand. They were reconciled subsequently, but William never forgot Robert's treachery.

In 1082 there was a clash with Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, who was William's half-brother. Soon after Senlac the bishop had been created Earl of Kent, and the king had employed him as one of the regents during his absences in Normandy; but his senseless cruelty had alienated the English, and William had undoubtedly made up his mind to use the first opportunity to break this reckless man's power. That opportunity came in 1082 when Odo collected a large force of armed men. It was popularly believed that the ambitious prelate meant to fight his way into the Chair of St Peter, but William suspected that there were other motives for his action, and in the light of Odo's behaviour in Rufus's reign William must not be too harshly blamed for his suspicions. When his arrest was ordered, Odo proudly protested that he was a bishop and therefore immune from punishment by the secular power; but William, prompted so it was said by Lanfranc who was well versed in the subtleties of canon law, retorted that he arrested not the Bishop of Bayeux, but the Earl of Kent; and Odo was clapped into prison.

William and Lanfranc understood each other perfectly. On Stigand's deposition by papal authority the learned Abbot of St Stephen's in Caen [1] had become Archbishop of Canterbury. It was the prelude to a complete reorganisation of the Church in England. Lax Anglo-Saxon bishops were deposed and replaced by stern Normans; diocesan sees were removed from small villages to larger towns; a rigid reformation took place in existing monasteries, and many new monastic houses were founded; and the old Anglo-Saxon arrangement whereby ecclesiastical and civil suits were tried in the same courts was dispensed with and churchmen were given their own courts. Here was the source of the future quarrel between Church and State in England; for the

[1] Lanfranc, on the eve of William's departure for England, had been appointed abbot of the new abbey which was built in Caen as a penance for William's disobedience in marrying Matilda.

arrangement was workable only when, as was the case in William's reign, king and archbishop were men of like mind and understanding. It must not be imagined, on the other hand, that William was a pliant tool in the hands of the churchmen. He refused to do homage to Pope Gregory VII. for England, and asserted the ancient rule of the kingdom that the royal assent was necessary before a pope could be recognised, a tenant-in-chief excommunicated, and a papal bull published in England.

In 1083 death robbed William of his queen. Naturally his remorse was great: they had been ideally happy, and so true had he been to his marriage vows that men scoffingly said that he must be impotent. Two years later came the news that Cnut the Saint of Scandinavia was about to invade England. William collected a great army in Normandy, crossed the Channel, wasted the coastal districts in England so that the invaders would find it impossible to live on the country, and then quietly waited for the Danes. It was during this visit to England that he ordered the survey of the kingdom (Christmas 1085). His English subjects murmured: to them the idea seemed all wrong. "So very narrowly he caused it to be traced out," wrote a native chronicler, "that there was not one single hide, nor one yard of land, nor even—it is a shame to tell, though it seemed to him no shame to do—an ox, nor cow, nor a swine was left, that was not set down in his writ."

Cnut's assassination in July 1086 removed the threat of invasion and left William free to return to Normandy. He was particularly anxious to get back: in later years he had grown very fat, and the doctors in Rouen professed that they had a treatment which never failed in cases of obesity. In 1087 the dispute with his suzerain over the Vexin, the strip of territory between the lands of the Norman dukes and the domain of the French kings, came to a head, when the men of Mantes raided and plundered parts of eastern Normandy. William knew that Philip of France applauded these doings: he had heard that the French king had likened him to a woman heavy with child. In a towering rage, therefore, William invaded the Vexin in August 1087: Mantes was taken and burnt. But as he rode through the streets of the desolated town his horse, stumbling so it was said over a red-hot cinder, threw him heavily forward on to the pommel of the saddle, and inflicted a serious internal injury. In agony he was carried in a litter back to Rouen, staying at first in the ducal palace, and then for quiet's sake removing to the Priory of St Gervase without the town. There in the presence of his sons William and Henry, his physician, Bishop Gilbert Maminot of Lisieux, Abbot Guntard of Jumièges, and a few personal attendants, he reviewed the events of his life. He justified them on the grounds of duty—all except the conquest of England; and the memory of the slaughter which had accompanied it filled him with a terrible fear for the safety of his soul.

His mind was clear to the last. Normandy he gave to Robert; he wrote to Lanfranc asking him to secure England for William; and Henry was told to take £5000 in silver from his treasury. His confessors urged him to release his prisoners: he agreed to their proposal, but for a long time he would not consent to set Odo of Bayeux free. He awoke with the dawn on 9th September after a good night's sleep, and the first sound that fell upon his ears was the tolling of the great bell in the tower of Rouen cathedral. He asked one of his attendants what it meant. "My lord, the bell tolls for Primes at St Mary's Church," was the reply. Lifting his hands in prayer the sick man said: "To Mary, the Holy Mother of God, I commend myself, that by her blessed intercession I may be reconciled to her beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ." Then he fell back dead. In the hour of his helplessness his attendants left him; but his corpse was carried for burial to Caen by a simple knight, Herlwin, and in due course it was interred in the abbey of St Stephen's, his own foundation.

That William the *Bastard* was a great king is an indisputable fact of history. He brought England out of the Teutonic backwaters into the mainstream of the Latin culture, and laid the foundations of her social structure so surely that she was never destined for any length of time to experience the worst evils of an unrestrained feudalism. Ruthless and heartless, avaricious and unapproachable, he may have been; but he saved the people of England from unbridled oppression, and gave their land a degree of peace and prosperity not known in the lands of the Continent.

> The King William about whom we speak was a very wise man and very powerful, more dignified and strong than any of his predecessors were. He was mild to the good man who loved God; and over all measure severe to the men who gainsayed his will. . . . He was a very rigid man, so that no one durst do anything against his will. . . . Among other things is not to be forgotten the good peace that he made in this land, so that a man who had any confidence in himself might go over his realm with his bosom full of gold, unhurt. . . . He planted a great preserve for deer, and he laid down laws therewith, that whosoever should slay hart or hind should be blinded. . . . As greatly did he love the tall deer as if he were their father. . . . His great men bewailed it, and the poor men murmured thereat, but he was so obdurate, that he recked not of the hatred of them all; but they must wholly follow the king's will, if they would live, or have land, or property, or even his peace.

Such is the panegyric of the scribe who made the entry in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* in the year of William's death.

WILLIAM RUFUS, LIKE his father, was stockily built, with a tendency to corpulence. His ruddy complexion and shock of yellow hair gave him the nickname of *Rufus*; he had a speckled, restless eye, and mouthed his words jerkily.

His father looked upon him as the most dutiful of his four sons,[1] and obviously had a high opinion of his abilities or he would not have recommended him as his successor on the English throne. One cannot be certain about the date of his birth—probably it occurred in 1058 or 1059; but it may have been as late as 1060 or even as early as 1056. Lanfranc was his tutor, and it was from the archbishop that he received the accolade of knighthood.

Rufus left Rouen on the day before his father passed to his rest. He hastened with all speed to England to deliver his father's letter of recommendation to Lanfranc. His travelling companions on the voyage across the Channel were Morkere and Harold's brother Wulfnoth, whom the dying king had released from captivity; but their freedom was to be shortlived, for soon after their arrival in their native land they were arrested at Rufus's orders, and sent back to prison. On 26th September the new king was crowned by Lanfranc.

The reign opened auspiciously. Rufus faithfully carried out his dead father's wishes, distributing alms to the poor in every English county and bestowing gifts upon countless English churches and abbeys; and with a fine gesture of generosity he restored his uncle Odo of Bayeux to his earldom of Kent. The confidence, however, was misplaced. Within three months, the unruly bishop was in revolt against his nephew's rule. More disconcerting from Rufus's point of view was the knowledge that his own chief adviser, William de Carilef, Bishop of Durham, was in league with the rebels. But the rebellion can be regarded as a tribute to Rufus's power; for the revolted barons openly said that it was their intention to replace him by his "more tractable" brother Robert.

Once aware of the conspiracy Rufus "sent after the English men and set forth his need, and prayed their help, and promised them the best laws that ever were in the land, and that he would forbid all unjust taxation, and give them back their woods and their hunting." So the native English flocked to the royal standard, and marched cheerfully with their king into Kent where Odo had garrisoned his castles. Tonbridge was stormed; Pevensey starved into submission; and Odo promised to surrender Rochester which was his own headquarters. The promise was broken, and Rufus and his men thereupon besieged the place. Forced at last to yield, Odo tried to come to terms, but Rufus would not listen to his pleadings, and his English troops, eager to hang the bishop, called for "halters." Unwisely, Rufus allowed Odo to go to Normandy: he treated William of Carilef in the same way, and both men were soon doing their utmost to poison Robert's mind against his brother.

Not that Robert required anyone to inflame him against Rufus: when he returned from the crusade to find that he had been robbed of what he regarded

[1] William *the Bastard* had four sons—Robert, Richard, William, and Henry. Richard was also slain while hunting in the New Forest.

as his lawful inheritance, he was infuriated against his younger brother, and preparations for war were made by both sides. Philip of France supported Robert; but "by his cunning and his treasures" Rufus bought off the French king and on landing in Normandy in 1091 the English king was so enthusiastically received by the people that Robert deemed it wiser to come to terms. By treaty the two brothers therefore agreed that Rufus should retain that part of Normandy which had already acknowledged him, that they should join together to regain the territory lost by Robert, and that in event of either dying without lawful issue the survivor should take his inheritance. This arrangement at once involved the two brothers in a war against their youngest brother Henry *Beauclerc*, who had bought the Avranchin and Cotentin with Mont St Michel from Robert for £3000. The war was over within a month, and Henry was left landless.

Scotland claimed Rufus's attention on his return with Robert to England. In his absence Malcolm III. had raided the northern shires, and unless his wings were clipped there would be no peace on the northern border. Rufus marched into Scotland and forced Malcolm to do him homage at the Firth of Forth. He was in the north again in 1092, and on this occasion he performed what has been called "the one good deed" of his reign. He restored Carlisle, and sent "many folks with their wives and cattle to dwell in" the desolated north.

It was the king's godless life which troubled his subjects: the kingdom could not hope to prosper, said the churchmen, when such a man ruled over it. In his court were to be found effeminate young men wearing "flowing hair and extravagant dress;" and it was whispered, with what truth it is now impossible to say, that Rufus himself indulged in the most bestial unnatural vices. On Lanfranc's death in 1089 no attempt was made to appoint an archbishop: the revenues of Canterbury and other vacant sees were appropriated for the king's use, and bishoprics and abbacies were sold to the highest bidders. "God's churches he brought low," moans the chronicler, "and all the bishoprics and abbacies, whose elders died in his time, he either sold for money, or held in his own hand, or set them to farm." It was useless as well as dangerous to argue with him; in his jesting moods Rufus scorned God indecently.

The fear of death broke Rufus's proud spirit. We are told that when he was stricken down with sickness at Alverstone in Gloucestershire in February 1093 "he made many promises to God to lead his own life aright and to give peace and security to God's churches, and never more to sell them for money, and to have all right laws among his people." Reluctantly Anselm was dragged into accepting the vacant archbishopric; and no one was more eager than Rufus himself that he should assume the leadership of the Church in England. Anselm was consecrated archbishop on 4th December 1093.

Vertue.

Reproduced by Courtesy of The British Museum.

WILLIAM II.

Early in 1095 king and archbishop were at variance. Anselm had in common with the clergy of Normandy acknowledged Urban II. as the true pope: he had made this clear to Rufus before he accepted the archbishopric; but the king had reserved judgment in the matter. Rufus claimed that no pope could be recognised in England without his consent: that was the ancient rule of the kingdom. The truth is that William meant to get rid of Anselm: the archbishop's saintliness of life was an offence to such an evil-living monarch. Unfortunately Rufus was caught in the trap which he had so cunningly laid for Anselm. He attempted to persuade Urban to deprive the archbishop of his authority, and in doing so recognised the pope whom Anselm claimed was the rightful occupant of the Chair of St Peter. But Rufus was not the man to admit defeat, and his next attack on the archbishop took a deadlier form. As a feudal baron, Anselm was required to send a contingent to serve with the king in the war against the Welsh. Rufus contended that his men were not adequately equipped or supplied for the service, and summoned Anselm to appear before him to make an explanation. Anselm refused to appear, and was rightly condemned for violating his feudal obligations.

The archbishop claimed the right to go to Rome to put his case before the pope: Rufus refused to give him consent to leave the kingdom. In 1097, however, when the request was repeated, he brutally told the archbishop that he was free to go, but he was to take nothing with him belonging to the king, and that if he went the temporalities of his see would be seized. "I have horses, clothes, and furniture," said Anselm; "perhaps someone will say they belong to the king; if so, I will go naked and barefoot rather than abandon my purpose." Rufus had not expected that reply, and the archbishop was told that it was not the king's wish that he should leave the kingdom without adequate clothes. Before he left, Anselm saw Rufus. "Not knowing when I shall see you again I commend you to God," he said simply to the king, "and as a spiritual father to a beloved son, as Archbishop of Canterbury to the King of England, I would fain, before I go, give you God's blessing and my own, if you refuse it not." Rufus was all confusion: "I refuse not your blessing," he said; and when the archbishop made the sign of the Cross he bowed down his head.

It would be ungenerous not to appraise Rufus's restless energy. One moment he is leading his men into the heart of Wales, the next he is fighting like a demon on the Continent. His Welsh campaigns were not conspicuously successful: he might boast that he would "slay all the men of Wales," but when the time came to translate words into actions he found to his dismay that the Welsh were not to be drawn into fighting pitched battles, and like so many of his kingly successors who warred in Wales he led home a bedraggled army without having "hardly succeeded in slaying one of" the enemy. In

1096 Robert again took the Cross: to obtain the money necessary for financing his expedition he pledged his duchy to Rufus for the sum of 10,000 marks. There is little doubt that whatever were the actual conditions of the transaction Rufus was determined that Robert should never again have control of Normandy; and with this object in view he strove to consolidate his position by gaining Maine and the Vexin. It was a ding-dong struggle, but Rufus could at least claim that the honours went to him (1098–99). In the summer of 1100 the Duke of Aquitaine sent to ask the English king if he would hold his duchy in pledge while he was away fighting in Palestine. Rufus readily assented: for a moment he saw himself the master of the whole of western France, and the vision fascinated him.

But it was not to be. On 2nd August, while hunting in the New Forest, he was, as the English chronicler had it, "shot off with an arrow from his own men." No one can now know what happened. Walter Tirel, who was blamed for the deed, vehemently denied that the fault was his "when he had nothing to hope or fear." When the news of the tragedy went round, the members of the hunting-party ran for their lives, and it remained for some simple charcoal burners to wrap the corpse in coarse cloths and carry it in their cart to Winchester. Next day Rufus was buried in a grave beneath the central tower of the cathedral church. No bell tolled, no service was said, no one stood by the grave to weep; and when some years later the central tower came hurtling to the ground, men said that God had punished the cathedral authorities for allowing such a devil to lie in their church.

"Though I hesitate to say it," wrote the scribe in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, "all things that are loathsome to God and to earnest men were customary in this land in his time; and therefore he was loathsome to well-nigh all his people, and abominable to God, as his end showed, forasmuch as he departed in the midst of his unrighteousness, without repentance and without expiation." It could be said that like his father he kept a firm hand over his baronial subjects; but the mercenaries whom he employed were seldom checked, and wherever they went misery followed in their train. The people groaned under the extortions of his chief confidant and minister, Ranulf Flambard, and they looked back upon his reign as a time when "all right fell down and all unright, for God and for the world, uprose."

HUNTING IN THE New Forest at the same time as Rufus was killed by an unknown arrow was his youngest brother Henry *Beauclerc*. One contemporary chronicler states that he went immediately to where the body lay and wept over it: actually as soon as he learnt of the tragedy he rode top speed to Winchester, where he demanded from the guards the keys of the royal treasury. They were refused him. William de Breteuil, the treasurer, said

that the lawful heir was Robert, the first-born son of his father. Henry drew his sword and boldly protested that no man should stand between him and his kingdom, and a violent dispute thereupon took place outside the treasury. The people gathered round to listen; many intervened in the dispute; and when it was found that Henry's supporters were more numerous than his brother's the keys were handed over. On 3rd August a great council was summoned, and Henry, chiefly on the recommendation of Henry Beaumont, Earl of Warwick, was elected king: two days later he was crowned at Westminster by Bishop Maurice of London.

The English joyfully accepted Henry as Rufus's successor. He had been born in their land—at Selby in Yorkshire in 1068, and was known already not only as a purposeful leader but a genial fellow of ready wit and easy manners. Unlike many of his fellow princes he had a genuine appreciation of scholarship, and with it he combined proficiency in arms and the gift of political ability. In his eighteenth year his father had knighted him, and he had been carefully brought up by Lanfranc; and his nickname *Beauclerc* was a tribute to his own scholarly attainments. His immoralities were scandalous, even when judged by the standards of his age; but they were counteracted by a strong constitution and a sound common sense which prevented his heart ever from running away with his head. Physically he was like his father and brother Rufus—a powerfully built man of middle height, and in later years he followed the family habit of putting on flesh. He had not his father's tendency to baldness: his hair was black and grew thickly above his forehead, and his eyes were kindly. Unlike his father and brother he had his temper perfectly under control, and so inscrutable was he that none was certain when he was in or out of favour. Callously indifferent to human suffering, he was cruel and ruthless; he never forgave an enemy, but he never forgot a friend, and sentiment was never allowed to dictate his actions. He had a great capacity for hard work, but he also took his amusements lightheartedly, and nothing gave him more pleasure than a day's hunting.

Henry's first aim was to create a good impression in the country. Thus, on the day of his coronation he issued a solemn charter in which he promised to redress the nation's grievances and to obey the "law of Edward" as it had been amended and expanded by his father William I. Ranulf Flambard was thrown into prison, and Rufus's unpopular counsellors were replaced by "strenuous and sagacious" men. In a letter to Anselm the new king said: "I commit myself and the whole realm of England to the guidance of yourself and of those who have the right to share with you in guiding me." And to establish himself in the affections of his English subjects Henry resolved to marry Edith, the daughter of the Scot Malcolm Canmore and the English St Margaret, who was "of the right King kin of England." But there was

an obstacle to this match. Edith had spent much of her girlhood in a nunnery, and some averred that she had made her profession as a nun. She herself denied this, saying she had worn the veil solely to shield her from the covetous glances of rough Norman suitors. Anselm, however, after probing deeply into the matter, came to the conclusion that there was no impediment to the marriage which Henry so earnestly desired. The proud Normans jeered at their king for taking as his queen one of the conquered race, and courtiers nicknamed the couple Godric and Godgifu. But the English rejoiced: to them the marriage was the symbol of the union of conqueror and conquered.

Henry's accession was by no means popular with the barons, and very early in the reign there were plots in favour of Robert who had now returned from the Holy Land. Ranulf Flambard, escaping from his prison early in 1101, fled to Normandy, where he sedulously inflamed Robert against his younger brother, and preparations were made for an invasion of England. Henry was not to be caught napping: calling out the native English militia he begged their help, and drilling them in person he taught them how to meet the attack of the better armed knights who would constitute the invading force. Of all the barons of England only five were wholeheartedly on his side—Robert fitzHamon, the conqueror of Glamorgan; Richard de Redvers, who held lands in Devonshire; Roger Bigod, the castellan of Norwich; Robert Beaumont, Count of Meulan; and his brother, Henry, Earl of Warwick. But the clergy were with Henry, and Anselm himself joined the defence force to encourage the people.

Robert landed near Portsmouth in July 1101: he was at once joined by some of the great barons of England. He advanced towards London, but at Alton in Hampshire, he found his path barred by Henry and his English levies, and instead of risking a battle he opened negotiations. He was no match in diplomacy for the wily King of England. By the treaty which was concluded between the brothers, Robert renounced his claim to England on condition that Henry would give up his Norman lands except Domfront, would pay him as a pension 3000 marks a year, and would restore to Robert's adherents their English lands. At the same time, however, it was agreed that if either should die without lawful issue the other should succeed to his dominions.

Henry was determined to take vengeance on the rebel barons. The terms of the treaty signed at Alton precluded him from proceeding against them for their part in the rebellion; but he soon made it his business to find other pretexts for dealing with them, and one by one they were made to feel the might of his authority. Robert of Bellême, Earl of Shrewsbury, his brother Arnulf, Earl of Pembroke, and Roger of Poitou, who held lands in west Lancashire, sensed Henry's purpose, and when the first was summoned to the royal courts to answer some forty-five charges preferred against him, he refused to obey and took up arms to defend himself. Once again the English came to the aid of a

Norman king, and the conspiracy was broken. When Shrewsbury castle fell the English soldiers went mad with delight. "Rejoice, King Henry," they chanted, "and give thanks to the Lord God; for thou wast a free king on the day that thou overcamest Robert of Bellême, and dravest him from the borders of thy kingdom." The exiles were naturally given a hospitable reception in Normandy.

Anselm's return had not composed the quarrel between Church and State. The archbishop returned to England bent upon enforcing the recent decrees of the Lateran Council against lay investiture, and when he was required to do homage for his lands to Henry he flatly refused. The king pointed out that he had done homage to his brother Rufus; but Anselm's retort was that he was bound to obey the laws of the Church, and lay investitures had since been declared unlawful. No bitterness of feeling marred the relations of king and archbishop during this dispute: they remained fast friends, and, as we have seen, Anselm loyally lent his support against the movement in Robert's favour. The dispute struck hard at the royal prerogatives: kings had long exercised the right of electing the bishops of the sees within their realms, and of investing them with the crozier and the ring. Henry and Anselm agreed to refer the matter to Rome. The dispute dragged on, and it was not until 1107 that a settlement was reached. Bishops were to be elected in the royal courts, and were required to do homage for their lands to the king; but only the Church had the right to invest them with the crozier and the ring. It was a compromise, but Henry had the best of it, for he retained the right to control episcopal elections.

With Normandy riven with anarchy, the inevitable result of Robert's feeble attempts to rule the duchy, it was impossible for Henry to sit idly by. The duchy was a refuge for barons disaffected with his rule: it was a convenient base for their treacherous operations against him. In Normandy lurked his bitterest enemies—Robert of Bellême and William of Mortain, the latter claiming the earldom of Kent as Bishop Odo's heir; and both men had attacked the Norman possessions of Henry's friends. Henry thereupon took a force into the duchy. He had an interview with his brother and lectured him for supporting Robert of Bellême and William of Mortain, and the strength of Henry's force so impressed the duke that he purchased peace by bestowing upon Henry the county of Évreux. But once Henry's back was turned the plottings were renewed; and in 1105 the English king made up his mind to put an end to this danger from Normandy by conquering the duchy. Cunningly he bought off Robert's allies—Philip of France and the Count of Flanders—and, using the wealth of England to collect mercenaries from Anjou, Maine, and Brittany, he proceeded to break Robert's power. At Tinchebrai, which lay on the estates of the Counts of Mortain, the issue was decided in September 1106. Robert was hopelessly

beaten, and Henry was master of Normandy. Many English had taken part in this engagement: to them the victory was doubly pleasant, for they chose to regard it as vengeance for the disaster of Senlac. Robert, who was taken during the fighting, was thrown into prison, where he remained until he died in 1134.

There was to be little peace for Henry in Normandy. The barons of the duchy resented his strong rule, and they consequently espoused the cause of William *the Clito*, Robert's son. The new king of France, Louis VI. *le Gros*, lent them his support: for him it was a source of danger to have such a powerful vassal, and it was part of his policy to increase the power of the French crown at the expense of Normandy. Luck and skilful diplomacy, however, strengthened Henry's position. Robert of Bellême was captured in 1112; in the following year Henry and Louis came to terms at Gisors, when the French king openly recognised Henry's claims to Bellême, Maine, and Brittany; in 1114 came the marriage of Henry's daughter Matilda to the Emperor Henry V., which brought added lustre to the English king's fame; and early in 1120 the heir to England's throne was betrothed to Matilda, the daughter of Fulk of Anjou, who had been until then a supporter of *the Clito's* cause. Later in the same year on the plain of Brennéville Henry completely routed a force under Louis VI., Baldwin of Flanders and William *the Clito*, and sent them headlong into Les Andelys. Louis, who had thus violated the treaty of Gisors made seven years earlier, retaliated with a raid into Normandy; but it achieved nothing; and recognising that he was no match for Henry he appealed to Pope Calixtus II., before whom he laid complaints against the English king. The pope mediated between the two monarchs, and eventually peace was made. It was a victory for Henry, for although the basis of the settlement was the *status quo ante bellum*, Louis allowed the young Prince William to do homage for the lands which would one day be his; and by this act the French king repudiated *the Clito's* claims.

In the hour of his triumph the fates dealt Henry a cruel blow. A drunken pilot ran *La Blanche Nef*, or *the White Ship*, on a rock off the Norman coast, and all on board except a butcher from Rouen were drowned. She was the vessel in which Prince William and his young friends were returning to England, and stored within her hull was the royal treasure. For a whole day none dared to tell the king of his loss. At last the young son of Count Theobald was chosen for the task which none of his elders had the courage to perform; and when he stuttered out the awful news Henry fell insensible to the ground. His plans were shattered: *the Clito* was now his heir.

He would cheat the fates yet. Matilda, his queen, had died in 1117; but he would take another wife; and with the advice of his councillors Henry chose as his second queen Adela, the daughter of Godfrey VII. Count of Louvain. The

death of Prince William was the signal for a revival of *the Clito's* claims in Normandy, and his marriage to Sibylla of Anjou turned a friend into an enemy. Henry's imperial son-in-law came to his aid : he massed his forces on the Rhine, thereby compelling Louis to keep his attention on that frontier ; and the pope was persuaded to declare null and void *the Clito's* marriage to the Angevin countess. Henry thereupon dealt savagely with the Norman rebels, and quickly brought the duchy back to its allegiance. In 1125, however, the Emperor Henry V. died, and Matilda returned to her father's court. This gave Henry his opportunity : in 1126 he named her as his successor, and compelled the chief barons of England and Normandy to do homage to her. Nor was he to be deterred from his purpose : when *the Clito* in January 1127 married the French king's sister, Henry retaliated by arranging the betrothal of Matilda to Geoffrey, the son and heir of Fulk of Anjou. The projected marriage was most unpopular : the Normans and Angevins had long been enemies, and many of the barons of the duchy quitted their estates to serve *the Clito* rather than submit to the rule of an Angevin duke. The marriage was solemnised in 1129 : a year before *the Clito* had died of a wound received at the siege of Alost. In 1131 Henry again required the baronage of England to do homage to his daughter, and two years later the birth of the future Henry II. seemingly placed the succession beyond all dispute.

During his reign Henry experienced little trouble from the side of Scotland. The northern kingdom was ruled successively by his first wife's brothers—Edgar, Alexander I., and David I. Alexander, who was married to one of his bastard daughters, was frequently at Henry's court, and in 1114 he took a contingent of Scottish knights into Wales with the English army. David had been brought up in England, and in 1114 Henry had allowed him to marry Waltheof's daughter. Her marriage portion was the earldom of Huntingdon ; but David could not forget that his father-in-law had been Earl of Northumberland, and when the time came, after Henry's death, for him to attempt to shake off the English supremacy he boldly asserted his claim to this part of England.

In his dealings with Wales Henry preferred diplomacy to war. It is true that in 1114 he made a spectacular military progress into the principality to overawe the masterful Gruffydd ap Cynan and that he was rewarded with the submission of a number of Welsh princes ; but he was much too much of a realist not to recognise the ephemeral character of such an achievement ; and he soon learnt that the western frontier of his kingdom was the more surely to be protected by playing off the Welsh princes one against another, and by encouraging the acquisitiveness of the marcher lords. He established the de Clares in Gwent and Ceredigion, districts which can be taken roughly to represent the present-day shires of Monmouth and Cardigan ; and he married his bastard son Robert of Gloucester to Mabel, the heiress of Robert fitzHamon,

Lord of Morgannwg (Glamorgan). He supported Canterbury's claim to authority over the Welsh sees; and, though it was not part of a deliberate policy of conquest, a colony of Flemings was planted in Pembrokeshire. The success of Henry's policy in Wales is best judged from the words of the scribe of Llanbadarn: he was "the man with whom none may strive, save God Himself, who hath given him the dominion."

But Henry's claim to greatness rests upon the administrative reforms which were introduced during his reign. Before he died his subjects liked to think of him as "the Lion of Justice" referred to in Merlin's prophecy. The time had not come when a monarch could dispense with the great feudal officers, but their power could be successfully countered by the appointment of royal officials who were wholly dependent upon the crown; and that was part of Henry's plan. Wrote Oderic Vitalis: "he raised them (the officials) from the dust to do his service."

Take the case of Roger of Salisbury who was chief minister during the greater part of Henry's reign. He was a man of humble birth, and when he first came to the notice of his future master was a simple priest serving a little wayside chapel near Caen. Curiously enough he was ill-educated: indeed his enemies said—and probably with much truth—that he was almost illiterate; but he had a shrewd political sense, and was prepared to give Henry an unqualified service. So in 1101 Roger was made chancellor, and in the following year was preferred by his royal patron to the vacant see of Salisbury. About 1107 or 1108 Henry appointed him justiciar; and though it cannot definitely be said that the office then possessed "a precise official significance" it is nevertheless significant to find that Roger is not infrequently described as "second to the king."

Roger of Salisbury played a great part in the forging of the machinery required to maintain law and order in the state. Bishop Stubbs maintained that it was under the direction of this remarkable man that "the whole of the administrative system was remodelled." In this work he displayed little originality, but the result was the creation of a strong central government, which administered the law without fear or favour; and for his efforts Roger won from his contemporaries the proud title of "the Sword of Righteousness."

It has been truthfully said that "the rule of law is the keynote to the inner history of the reign." The king is not only the fount of justice, but the law administered in his court stands over all other law. Now and then Henry's father and brother had sent judges out into the kingdom to try cases dealing with the king's peace or to collect special information from the juries of the county courts. In Henry's reign this practice was seemingly much more regularly followed, and it had the salutary effect of undermining the authority of the baronial courts and the mass of local customs which often overrode the

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HENRY I.

law. In other words, the itinerant judges enforced throughout the land a uniform system of public and private law. There was little flexibility in the law which they administered: they looked upon it, as indeed they were meant to look upon it, as *always and everywhere* unalterable. There were inevitable hardships, for the law was made an inhuman taskmaster, but it was some consolation to know that it was the same law for all; and it was during this reign that the legal rule was plainly stated—that no lord had the right to slay his villein or unfree tenant.[1]

The *curia Regis* or *King's Court* was the coping stone in this administrative edifice. Here it is impossible to describe its organisation and functions in more than general terms. It was presided over by the king or the justiciar: among its members were the chief royal officials. Before it came up for discussion those pleas which immediately concerned the realm and the king; it supervised the assessment and collection of the revenue; and served as a judicial court of appeal. It was before this *curia Regis* that recalcitrant barons were brought to answer such charges as the king preferred against them. Had they been tried in the local courts their influence might have secured them favourable verdicts; in the *curia Regis* they were at the mercy of the rule of law upon which Henry insisted.

Winchester was the financial headquarters of the kingdom; and there twice a year, at Easter and Michaelmas, the sheriffs came to render their accounts. The revenue was in the main derived from two sources—(1) the *ferm*, which was a fixed sum paid in by the sheriffs in respect of their shires, and (2) the proceeds of the courts of justice and feudal obligations. Actually the national exchequer was divided into two separate chambers—that of Receipt and that of Account. Each sheriff appeared before the latter to make his statement of income and expenditure before the great officers of State and the judges of the *curia Regis*: after his examination was completed he passed on to the other chamber where the coin was counted, assayed, and stored. Two fiscal innovations made their appearance about this time: (1) payments in kind were no longer accepted by the central government; and (2) the sheriffs were only credited with the value of the silver in the coin delivered by them.[2]

Henry was always a good friend of the merchants. His charter to London, granting as it did wide powers of self-government to the merchants of the capital, was the ideal to which townsmen all over the country aspired; and many charters were granted during this reign. Both king and merchants benefited: by selling charters for cash the former augmented the treasure of the crown,

[1] It was stated in the law-book which was compiled in this reign and is known as the *Leges Henrici* that "if a lord slay his villein blameless let him pay the were to the kindred; for the man was a serf to serve and not to be slain."

[2] The latter was not strictly speaking an innovation, having been practised by earlier kings; but it was only in Henry's reign that it was regularly done.

and by purchasing rights of self-government the latter were enabled to sweep away some of the restrictions which hampered trade.

The strain of the busy life which Henry had lived began to tell on him when he reached the sixties. He was taken seriously ill at Windsor at Christmas 1132, and for some days his life was despaired of; but within a month he was reported to be on the mend, and his recovery was hastened by the news that he was a grandfather (March 1133). In August he went over to Normandy to see his little grandson, and for nearly a year remained at Rouen with his daughter and her children.[1] He was supremely happy, and nothing gave him greater pleasure than to dangle the babies at his knees.

The news that Welsh rebels had burnt the castle of Pain fitzJohn, one of his judges and sheriff of Herefordshire and Shropshire, dispelled the old king's comfortable domestic bliss; and he made ready to return home to lead another expedition into Wales. But as he was about to embark his son-in-law picked a quarrel with him, and the inevitable result was that the disaffected barons of Normandy joined with Geoffrey against him. Others had to deal with the Welsh: he remained behind to punish his son-in-law's turbulent friends. His refusal to pardon one of them led to a quarrel with his daughter Matilda, and in a rage she left him, taking with her the two little boys upon whom he had lavished so much affection. The parting brought him great unhappiness, and in consequence his health was seriously impaired. Towards the end of November, when out hunting in the forest of Lyons, he was taken violently ill, the result, so it was said, of eating lampreys; and knowing that the end was near he sent his men to bring Archbishop Hugh of Rouen to minister to him. In the evening of 1st December 1135 Henry died, at peace with God and man. They buried his bowels in the church of St Mary de Pré at Émandréville, which was one of his mother's foundations: his body, after lying in state in St Stephen's in Caen for a month, was carried over the Channel to be buried in the church of the abbey which he had founded in Reading.

His English subjects mourned him. "Good man he was, and great awe there was of him," said the English chronicler. "No man durst misdo another in his time. Peace he made for man and deer. Whoso bare his burden of gold and silver no man durst say to him aught but good."

FOREMOST AMONG THE barons who had done homage to Matilda in 1126 and 1131 was Stephen of Boulogne, the third son of Count Stephen Henry of Blois and Chartres by his wife Adela, the daughter of William *the Bastard*. He was an attractive young man; warm-hearted and impulsive; brave and chivalrous. Born between 1097 and 1100 he had been brought up at the court of his uncle, the dead king Henry, who not only saw that he received a good

[1] Matilda gave birth to a second son, Geoffrey, in 1134 (Whitsun).

education, but after the loss of *the White Ship* treated him as a son, and granted him rich lands on both sides of the Channel. It was Henry who found him his charming wife—Matilda of Boulogne: in the dark days of the anarchy which enshrouded the land she never deserted him, but strove valiantly to rally his dwindling forces, and to make him act like a king.

In a sense kingship was thrust upon Stephen. Had the little Henry been older it is doubtful whether there would have been a disputed succession at Henry I.'s death. As it was the little prince was only two years old, and his accession would have meant a long period of regency. To the proud barons of England and Normandy the thought of a woman as their ruler was most distasteful, and it is no exaggeration to say that there was hardly a man of substance who wanted Matilda as queen—or even as regent. She was an evil-tempered woman; she was the wife of a hated Angevin. So men argued that in the public interest the oaths which had been sworn in 1126 and 1131 must be broken; and not long after Henry's death a tale went round that on his death-bed he had repented of having required those oaths.

But upon whom should the honours of the dead Henry devolve? Stephen lost no time in answering that question. No sooner was Henry dead than he took ship to England to seize the English throne. He was spurned by the men of Dover and Canterbury, but the Londoners welcomed him with open arms, and his brother Henry, the Bishop of Winchester, quickly seized the treasury for him. It was Bishop Henry who won over the churchmen: on his own honour he promised that the new king would uphold the Church's liberties, and on the strength of that promise William of Corbeuil, the Archbishop of Canterbury, crowned Stephen king about Christmas 1135.

In Normandy as Henry's successor the barons accepted without a moment's hesitation Stephen's eldest brother Theobald of Blois. He has been aptly described as "a timid politician with a taste for small undertakings and safe profits;" and once he learnt that Stephen had been crowned in England he renounced his claims to the kingdom and duchy and generously supported his brother's cause. Louis VI. also preferred Stephen to Matilda, obviously because he had no wish to see the arrogant Angevins established in England and Normandy, and at the papal court to which the rivals had appealed the whole weight of French influence was thrown into the scales in Stephen's favour.

Stephen never sat easily on his throne: he was a king "on sufferance." By extending the Church's privileges he made it possible for the clergy more effectively to oppose the royal authority. The additional rights of self-government which the Londoners received resulted in the rise of a *commune* which arrogated to itself wide and dangerous powers. The cession of Cumberland and Carlisle to David of Scotland merely whetted the Scotch king's appetite for other lands in northern England. The fine spirit of clemency shown by

Stephen in the early baronial disturbances of his reign was immediately interpreted as weakness. Had he retained the " new men " whom his uncle had used to operate the administrative machinery of the kingdom all might have gone well for him ; but he foolishly dispensed with their services ; and, when the civil war broke out, he surrounded himself not as his two uncles had done with native levies, but with Flemish mercenaries whose rapacity and lawlessness he was powerless to curb.

The traditional hatred of Anjou kept Normandy loyal. But Geoffrey, Matilda's husband, was a purposeful young man, and by 1144 he had so far succeeded in enforcing his authority upon the duchy that Louis VII. was compelled formally to recognise his claim to it. In the meantime England was ravaged by civil war and anarchy. In the opening stages of the struggle Stephen had a fair share of luck. In 1138 David of Scotland, who had espoused Matilda's cause, was overwhelmed at Northallerton in the Battle of the Standards. This advantage, however, was quickly liquidated by the defection of Robert of Gloucester, Matilda's natural brother, and it was at the very moment when the odds were against him that Stephen chose to quarrel with the Church, whose support had ensured the triumph of his claim to the throne in 1135.

The civil war raged off and on from 1139, when Matilda and Robert of Gloucester landed with an army to win the crown by force, until 1153, when the Treaty of Wallingford was concluded. Early in 1141 Stephen was taken prisoner at Lincoln. He was thrown into a dungeon in Bristol, and in April the English bishops deposed him and accepted Matilda as queen. But England soon tired of her imperious temper, and in the following December the bishops again met to reverse the proceedings of the previous church council, and to restore Stephen to the throne.

The country was in a hopeless condition. The machinery of government was at a standstill, and the poor people were exposed to all the evils of baronial lawlessness. Men like Ralph of Chester and Geoffrey de Mandeville played Stephen off against Matilda, and Matilda against Stephen, solely to extend their own jurisdictions ; and in the prevailing anarchy they saw the possibility of establishing themselves in semi-independent fief's such as existed on the Continent. The agony of the country is graphically described in the entry in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.*

> When the traitors perceived that he (Stephen) was a mild man, and soft, and good, and did no justice, then did they all wonder. They had done homage to him, and had sworn oaths, but had held no faith ; they were all forsworn and forfeited their troth, for every powerful man made his castles, and held them against him. They cruelly oppressed the wretched men of the land with castle-works. When the castles were made they filled them with devils and evil men. Then took they those men that they imagined had any property, both by night and by day, peasant men

Vertue.

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STEPHEN.

Henry renewed the civil war in England in 1153; but Stephen, his spirit broken by the death of his eldest son Eustace whom he hoped would succeed him on the English throne, had little object in continuing the struggle; and after a short campaign in which the honours went to the young Henry, negotiations for peace were opened. A settlement was soon reached and embodied in the Treaty of Wallingford. Henry was acknowledged as Stephen's heir, and was to co-operate with the king in the work of governing the country; the mercenaries employed by both sides were to be dismissed; and the "adulterine" or unlicensed castles erected during the reign were to be destroyed.

And in the last year of his life Stephen played a king's part: he marched against recalcitrant barons, and forced them to mend their evil ways and return to their allegiance. An accident to his eldest surviving son and the discovery of a plot to murder the young Henry brought him great grief; and on 25th October after a short illness he died at Dover. He was buried beside his wife and son Eustace in Faversham Abbey, a Cluniac foundation of which he was founder and patron.

A Chronicle of Kingship

1066—1937

CHAPTER II

THE ANGEVINS

Henry II., *fitzEmpress* :	1154–1189
Richard I., *Cœur de Lion* :	1189–1199
John, *Lackland* :	1199–1216
Henry III., *of Winchester* :	1216–1272

THAT HENRY II. was regarded by his contemporaries as an outstanding personality is evidenced by the wealth of information which was jotted down by chroniclers and gossips about his appearance and behaviour. He was sturdily built with a bullet-shaped head surmounted by a thick crop of closely-cut reddish hair ; and a pair of kindly grey eyes lit up a face which was splashed with freckles. But those eyes could nevertheless flash " like balls of fire when the demon-spirit of Anjou was roused," and when put out he was liable to paroxysms of rage during which he would utter the foulest blasphemies, roll in anger in the rushes on the floor of his chamber, and even gnaw them like an animal. Men put these outbursts down to " the demon-spirit of Anjou : " as Richard I. once said, " we came from the Devil, to the Devil we will return ; " and an old tale told how one of the countesses of Anjou had been a witch. But Henry was otherwise good-natured and would allow men to approach him on any matter ; he clung to his friends tenaciously and hated his enemies obstinately ; and although he was often charged with acts of senseless cruelty, he was not more cruel than his contemporaries. His restless energy —we are told that he was never for a moment still—greatly disconcerted his friends ; and he scorned fine clothes. Wearing ill-fitting tunics and trunks, his hands ungloved, he was said to resemble more a peasant on holiday than a king. He ate sparingly, drank hard, and loved lustfully ; but neither pleasure nor vice was allowed to interfere with business, and his capacity for hard work was enormous.

His early education naturally suffered much from the unquiet times during which his boyhood was lived. His first tutor was Master Peter de Saintes, of whom it was said that he " was learned above all his contemporaries in the science of verse ; " but after 1142, when the young Henry was brought to England by his uncle Robert of Gloucester, a certain Master Matthew had charge of his education ; and in the Earl Robert's Bristol house the boy was " imbued with letters and instructed in good manners beseeming a youth of his rank."

Whatever was the quality of the education which Henry received he certainly grew up to be one of the ablest monarchs of the twelfth century. He was always eager to acquire useful knowledge; he spoke well, and sometimes with a fine fluency; and it was said that he had a working knowledge of the languages spoken in the lands between Paris and Jerusalem. He was knighted at Carlisle on Whitsunday 1149 by his great-uncle David of Scotland, with whom he was then serving against Stephen; and, as we have already seen, after 1151 he was master of lands which stretched from the Somme to the Pyrenees. On 19th December Henry, then in his twenty-first year, was crowned King of England in Westminster Abbey by Theobald de Thiercéville, Archbishop of Canterbury.

In reviewing Henry's life and work two points should be understood. First, he was never an English king though he was King of England. His vast continental possessions made it impossible for him ever to regard himself otherwise than as an Angevin; and much of the work which he did for England was done with the object of acquiring the power necessary for the successful prosecution of his continental ambitions. The Angevin empire was a "hybrid empire." The tie by which the constituent members were held together was artificial in that it depended for strength upon the character and ability of its ruler; and no matter how strong and purposeful that ruler might happen to be he was harassed by the fear of revolt within and attack from without his possessions.

The second point to be noticed is that there was from the English point of view a virtue in being ruled by a foreigner. An Angevin like Henry took a detached view of English affairs, and consequently his policy was not restricted by considerations of patriotism or vested interest. Moreover, acquainted with various systems of government he had ample opportunity of discovering the good and the bad in them; and it is significant that many of the reforms which he successfully introduced into his English kingdom had been previously tried in his possessions on the other side of the Channel. England benefited, too, by the fact that her king was Duke of Normandy, Duke of Aquitaine, Count of Anjou, and Count of Maine: he was not merely the ruler of an island kingdom, but a great figure in the political life of western Europe, and in France alone his possessions were more extensive than those of his suzerain, the French king.

Henry had a keen appreciation of realities: he knew that a state is only in a financially healthy condition when it is well administered. The wealth of England he meant to use to finance his ambitious schemes on the Continent; and this drove him to see to it that the island kingdom was efficiently governed. Moreover, he was aware that the pursuit of his continental schemes would necessitate long absences from England: it was therefore imperative that the risks of revolt by the English baronage should be reduced to a minimum.

There was nothing novel in this. Both his great-grandfather and grand-

father had set themselves a similar task: they had set in motion efficient administrative machinery, and had placed checks on baronial pretensions; and although the one had ceased to operate and the other had been removed in the anarchy of Stephen's reign the claims of precedent could nevertheless still be stated without the risk of men saying that their liberties were being circumscribed by innovations. Thus Henry, soon after his coronation, announced that England would return to the system of government which had been used in the days of "King Henry, my grandfather."

His first concern was to liquidate the unfulfilled conditions of the Treaty of Wallingford. The Flemish mercenaries were sent out of the land; such "adulterine" castles as had not been destroyed were pulled down; the crown resumed possession of lands and castles alienated during the previous reign. There was some show of baronial resentment at this restoration of good order within the realm; but assisted by the native English levies Henry soon quelled the outbreaks of the few who defied his commands by force; and the rapidity of his movements completely overawed the many who would have taken advantage of any weakness on the king's part.

For the most part the men whom Henry selected to manage the machinery of government were unknown men. It is true that he retained in his service Bishop Nigel of Ely, the nephew of Roger of Salisbury, to reorganise the Exchequer; but the office of justiciar was shared by Richard de Lucy and Robert Beaumont, Earl of Leicester; and the chief subject in the kingdom was the chancellor Thomas Becket, who was the son of an impecunious London trader and was the king's inseparable companion. Within five years these men obliterated the memory of the anarchy of Stephen's reign; and the stage was set for those administrative reforms which were, strictly speaking, the logical continuation of Henry I.'s domestic policy.

Throughout Henry's reign Bishop Nigel and his son Richard fitzNigel, were in control of the Exchequer. They introduced no startling innovations, being content to consolidate the work so excellently done by Roger of Salisbury in Henry I.'s reign. Henry, however, was bent upon increasing the wealth of the crown. In 1159, for example, scutage [1] was re-introduced: it yielded about three times the amount of the old Danegeld which was the only recognised direct tax in the kingdom. But the new tax was a war-time measure, and it was doubtful whether it could be continued when peace was restored. Henry was therefore driven to look round for other ways of increasing his wealth. Two possibilities were open to him: first, a stricter collection of the crown's customary revenue; and, second, a better system of management on the

[1] This tax is usually called *the scutage*. Actually it went by three names: a *donum*, when levied from the shires; an *auxilium* when paid by the towns; and a *scutage*, when levied on the clergy and the feudal *tenants-in-mesne*.

crown estates. Henry seized upon both: commissioners inquired narrowly into regal rights; and royal manors were liberally stocked and placed in charge of reliable bailiffs. There was a financial object behind the famous *Inquest of Sheriffs* of 1170: the new sheriffs appointed to replace those men whom Henry dismissed after this inquiry collected no more from their respective shires, but they handed over to the Exchequer much larger sums when they rendered account of their stewardship. Jews were protected, and for this boon paid handsomely; the strict administration of the forest laws resulted in a great increase in the total of fines; and the townsmen were expected to pay dearly for any extension of their privileges.

The judicial reforms which Henry carried through had as their object the strengthening of the power of the crown against the baronage. Soon after his accession itinerant justices were sent throughout the country, as had been the practice in Henry I.'s time; and by the *Assize of Clarendon* (1166) it was decreed that these justices alone had the right to deal with offences against the public peace. In other words, they obtained the right of entry to the baronial as well as the shire and hundred courts; and ten years later, by the *Assize of Northampton*, the country was divided into six circuits, to each of which were attached three justices. In 1178 a more important step was taken when Henry separated the administrative and judicial departments of the *Curia Regis*. Five justices were appointed to deal with the cases which came up from the lower courts for rehearing. They constituted what was known as the *Curia Regis in Banco*, and were the forerunners of the King's Bench and the Court of Common Pleas. Henry himself took a keen interest in judicial business; and when the *Curia Regis in Banco* was set up it was understood that those cases which the five justices found difficult to decide were to be referred to the king.

More subtle was Henry's attack on baronial rapacity. In this connection he laid down three important principles. First, all cases involving a question of title to and possession of land could be referred to the itinerant justices or the *Curia Regis in Banco*; second, the possessor was not to be disturbed in his ownership until the courts had decided whether his title was good or not; third, the question of ownership was to be determined by a jury and not by an appeal to the ordeal of battle. Once the weaker of the king's subjects came to respect the impartiality of the justices whom Henry appointed—and he was particularly careful to choose good men for this work—the inestimable value of these reforms was everywhere appreciated.

It has often been said that Henry II. was the founder of the jury system. This is not true: juries had been used by his grandfather and great-grandfather in matters which affected the rights of the crown. For example, the famous Domesday Book was compiled from the evidence which juries had given before the royal commissioners. But after 1166 (the *Assize of Clarendon*) juries were

used in criminal and certain civil actions. The powers which the jurymen exercised in Henry's reign were vastly different from those which are exercised by a modern jury. In criminal actions they then *presented* to justice the criminal, and did not, as happens to-day, judge his crime: in civil actions they then acted as witnesses of fact, and were not concerned with such matters as the assessment of damages or the pronouncement of verdicts. Actually the jury of Henry's reign was the parent of the grand jury which was only recently abolished. The great advantage of this reform was that it gave the ordinary citizen a share in the administration of justice. There is little doubt that this was a deliberate move on Henry's part to raise up a counterpoise to baronial power; and part of the same policy was the *Assize of Arms* (1181) which decreed that every man in the kingdom must arm himself according to his means.

In 1162 Henry appointed his friend Becket to the vacant archbishopric of Canterbury. It was his biggest blunder, for Becket the archbishop was to prove himself to be a very different person from Becket the chancellor; and from the moment he assumed control over the Church in England he was determined to assert, even against the king, the Hildebrandine doctrine that "the clergy are above kings." A clash, therefore, was unavoidable. Henry was not a religious man: indeed, he openly scoffed at religion, and on his deathbed he was only with the greatest difficulty persuaded to accept the Church's last offices to the dying. During the anarchy of Stephen's reign the Church in England had greatly extended her privileges, and coinciding as this did with Hildebrandinism the clergy became dangerous rivals of the royal authority.

This rivalry was acutely felt in that sphere of government in which Henry himself was particularly interested—the administration of justice. It was Henry's dearest wish to make all his subjects equal before the law; but since the time of William the Conqueror the Church had her own courts, which took cognisance of all cases in which a clergyman was involved; and these courts inflicted only spiritual punishments which were wholly inadequate to check crime among those who claimed *benefit of clergy*. Any one in minor orders could claim *benefit of clergy*, and it was the easiest thing in the world to be consecrated a clerk in minor orders.

Under cover of a desire to establish the rule of law in England Henry delivered his attack against the Church. He was in a strong position: he could state that within ten years of his accession no less than one hundred murders had been committed by clerks, and that many cases of perversions of justice in the ecclesiastical courts had been brought to his notice. Matters came to a head in 1163 when a canon of Lincoln was acquitted in the bishop's court on a clear charge of homicide. Simon fitzPeter, one of the itinerant justices, endeavoured to reopen the case, but the canon, so we are told, "being a man of high birth, overwhelmed with grief and indignation, attacked the judge with

abuse," and the matter was immediately reported to the king. Henry thereupon demanded that the canon should be tried in the royal courts first for homicide and then for insulting a judge; but Becket replied that as the offender had been acquitted in the bishop's court the question of a re-trial did not arise, and that the Church was quite able to deal with the canon for his outburst against Simon fitzPeter.

While feeling ran high, Becket publicly opposed one of Henry's financial reforms at the Council of Woodstock. The king took his defeat badly, and retaliated by announcing that he meant to amend the law relating to criminous clerks. His proposals were modest enough, and conflicted neither with custom nor canon law: a clerk accused of breaches of the public peace was to be tried by his diocesan bishop in the presence of a royal officer, and if convicted was to be degraded and then handed over to the secular authority for punishment. Becket would have none of this: he said that it was manifestly unjust to inflict a twofold punishment for any crime; and when Henry demanded that the archbishops and bishops should respect the "ancestral customs of the kingdom" he received the reply that they would readily do so, "saving their own order." Henry's next move was to appeal to Pope Alexander III. It was a subtle move, for Pope and Emperor were at loggerheads, and Alexander could ill afford to offend such a powerful prince as Henry. To avoid the appearance of siding with the secular against the spiritual authority Alexander sent the Abbot de l'Aumône to act as mediator in the dispute; and Becket was persuaded by the abbot to make a formal recognition of the "ancestral customs of the kingdom." Henry insisted that the archbishop must make his submission in public, and a council was summoned to Clarendon for that purpose (January 1164). Becket now found himself faced not only with the so-called "ancestral customs of the kingdom" but also with Henry's recent proposals relating to criminous clerks; and naturally he refused to make his submission. He defied Henry to bring forward a precedent for those proposals, and when a doubtful one was forthcoming he took cover behind the scriptural text, "Touch not mine anointed." On the third day of the debate at Clarendon some lay barons entered the room in which Becket and the bishops were in session, and bluntly warned them that they would continue their opposition at their own peril. To the amazement of his friends Becket yielded in the face of these threats. "It is the king's will," he said, "that I should perjure myself. I will commit the crime which he requires and do penance for it in the future." And with that he accepted the royal proposals, which are generally known as the *Constitutions of Clarendon*.

Becket never intended keeping his word; and shortly after the meeting at Clarendon he secured from the Pope a dispensation absolving him from the promises which he had made. Henry suspected that the papacy was on Becket's side; and the royal suspicions were confirmed when he learnt that the

James Smith.

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HENRY II.

archbishop had made plans to leave the kingdom. An appeal to the king that one of the tenants of Canterbury had been refused justice in the archbishop's court gave Henry his opportunity to consolidate his own position: Becket was cited to appear before the *Curia Regis* to explain why his tenant had been denied a hearing; and when he sent proxies to act for him Henry chose to regard his conduct as an act of contempt of court.

Becket was cited before the Council of Northampton (October 1164) on this charge. His case was heard, and he was fined. Henry looked for a severer punishment; and in an outburst of rage he decided to break Becket by ordering him to give an account of the monies which had passed through his hands when he held the office of chancellor. Such an underhand attack stunned the archbishop. Nevertheless, with a fine show of spirit he defended himself: when he accepted the primacy, he said, the king promised that no outstanding claims would be made against him; but if he were given proper time he could produce his accounts; and he was ready there and then to pay 2000 marks in final settlement of any claims which could be made against him. Henry was adamant: the archbishop must give an immediate account of the £20,000 which had passed through his hands. In desperation Becket made a fatal move: after charging the bishops that they were on no account to sit in judgment on him, their spiritual superior, he appealed to the Pope. It was a flagrant violation of the *Constitutions of Clarendon*, and on this count he was condemned by the barons; but sentence was never formally pronounced against him; and by the beginning of November he was out of the country.

His flight was a blunder, for it constituted a further violation of the *Constitutions of Clarendon*, which had laid it down that no ecclesiastic should leave the country without the royal permission. Henry might have had matters his own way had he not also made a false move. In the hope of bringing Alexander III. over to his side he coquetted with the imperial court at Ratisbon which supported the anti-Pope. At once the English bishops repudiated such a discreditable policy; and the Pope came boldly out on Becket's side.

The quarrel dragged on until 1170. The Pope and French king attempted to find a formula which would prove acceptable to Henry and Becket; but the former was determined that the clergy should conform to the "ancestral customs of the kingdom;" and the latter was equally determined that the Church should lose none of her privileges. Henry himself would have welcomed a reconciliation for one particular reason—he was eager to have his eldest son crowned king;[1] and that could only be done by the Archbishop of Canterbury. In vain, overtures were made to the Roman *Curia* to allow the Archbishop of

[1] The crowning of the king's eldest son during the lifetime of his father was an innovation so far as England was concerned; but the practice had been followed in France and the Empire; and the Great Council in England offered no objection when Henry proposed to follow it.

York to officiate. Throwing prudence to the winds Henry proceeded without Pope or Becket; and the young Henry was crowned by the Archbishop of York and some of the bishops. The officiating clergy were immediately threatened with suspension, and there was a serious suggestion that Henry's continental lands should be placed under an interdict. For Henry there was only one way out of the difficulty—submission; and at Fréteval in July king and archbishop were reconciled.

Becket returned to Canterbury, and it was hoped that the quarrel was ended. But the archbishop had suffered much, and he longed to be revenged not so much upon Henry as upon the bishops whom he believed had lent him indifferent support; and on Christmas Day he placed the ban of the Church upon those who had officiated at the young Henry's coronation. When the king, who was at Bures near Bayeux, heard what had happened he flew into one of his uncontrollable rages. "My subjects are sluggards, men of no spirit," he screamed; "they keep no faith with their lord; they allow me to be made the laughing-stock of a low-born clerk." On hearing those words four knights of his retinue slipped quietly away and hastened to Canterbury, where on 29th December they brutally murdered the defenceless Becket in the sanctuary of his cathedral church.

Christendom was staggered by the news of the dastardly crime, and it was universally believed that the Pope would excommunicate Henry. It was a risk which Henry dared not run:[1] he renounced the *Constitutions of Clarendon*, and to escape from the consequences of his hasty words departed for Ireland. There was a good reason why he should visit the country. One of his more powerful subjects, Richard of Clare, Earl of Pembroke and Lord of Striguil (Chepstow), called *Strongbow* by his contemporaries, had virtually become ruler of Leinster on his marriage to the heiress of the late King Diarmid. Henry had no desire to see the establishment of an independent Irish kingdom: *Strongbow* was required to do homage for his Irish estates; and Henry sailed with him to pacify the sister island. Though he remained in Ireland for a considerable time, he did not conquer the country: Roderic, king of Connacht, and a number of other chieftains never made their submission to him. But before Henry left the country he defined the royal position. In a council at Cashel much-needed reforms were introduced into the Church in Ireland, and the Irish bishops swore allegiance to the English king; Dublin, Waterford, and Wexford were constituted royal domain, and Hugh de Lacy was made justiciar to rule the country in Henry's name.

On his return from Ireland Henry made his peace with the Church. On 21st

[1] Excommunication was the most terrible weapon which the Church could use against the secular power; and it absolved subjects of their allegiance to their king. To war against an excommunicated monarch was expected of all true sons of Holy Church.

May 1172 at Avranches he met the papal legates, and in their presence purged himself of complicity in, and promised expiation for, Becket's death; and undertook to abandon those " customs " introduced during his reign which were regarded as prejudicial to the Church. In his struggle with the Church he had lost. Probably Henry would have surrendered less readily were it not for the fact that he was aware that his own sons were uneasy in their loyalty to him, and were ready to ally themselves with his enemies in England and on the Continent.

Henry was an indulgent father. With the exception of John, his sons were allowed considerable power and were put in possession of large estates; but they were never completely independent of their father's authority; and what irked them even more than their dependence upon him was the fact that they were deliberately kept short of money. Unfortunately the influence of their mother made peace within the family circle impossible. Eleanor loathed Henry, as it was said, because of his infidelities; and the revenge which she took on him was to turn their sons against him. The three eldest sons—Henry, Richard, and Geoffrey—were attractive young men, brave and chivalrous; but they were unstable politicians, and beneath an outward show of brotherly love lurked the bitterest jealousies of one another.

The provision of an inheritance for John was the cause of the outbreak of the first rebellion of three brothers against Henry. The old king had arranged that John should marry the heiress of Humbert III., Count of Maurienne, whose lands controlled the main routes between France and Italy; and to provide this favourite son with a suitable estate Henry bestowed upon him three Angevin castles. The young Henry was at once up in arms: on the plea that he had been recognised as the heir to Anjou he told his father that no part of the county could be alienated without his consent; and when the king refused to listen to his protests he fled to the court of the French king. Louis VII. was only too eager to be able to thwart the plan to place John in control of Maurienne, and he did nothing to close the breach between father and son. Similarly Henry's queen threw the whole of her weight into the scales against her husband; and persuaded Geoffrey and Richard that it was their duty to support their brother. Some of the English barons, resentful of the way in which their power had been curbed by Henry's judicial reforms, sided with the discontented sons; and the promise of that part of northern England which Stephen had granted to David of Scotland brought William the Lion into the confederacy formed to overthrow the old king.

But Henry's luck held. Aided loyally by the native levies in England his officers were able to crush the rebel barons and to capture the Scottish king when he marched into the kingdom; and by a series of well-thought-out strokes Henry himself was quickly master of the situation on the Continent. One

concession he made to his sons—he undertook to provide them with incomes befitting their exalted stations; but he refused categorically to allow them to share the sovereign power with him; and despite their protests John was granted lands in England, Normandy, and Anjou. Another result of the rebellion was the Treaty of Falaise (August 1175), by which William the Lion in return for his release from captivity undertook to do homage to Henry for Scotland, and to admit English garrisons into the castles of Berwick, Jedburgh, Roxburgh, Edinburgh, and Stirling.

The accession of Philip Augustus placed on the throne of France a young man of resolution and courage, who yearned to give his country the boundaries which she had had in Charlemagne's time; and what must have troubled Henry even more than Philip's ability was the knowledge that he was one of his eldest son's dearest friends. In 1181 there was another family quarrel. The young Henry resented Richard's position as Duke of Aquitaine; and when the old king tried to compose their differences by suggesting that Richard and Geoffrey should do homage for their possessions to their eldest brother he unwittingly added fuel to the flames, for the young Henry would not accept the arrangement fearing lest the act of homage would be construed as an admission of their claims to Aquitaine and Brittany which he regarded as his heritage. This failure to patch up a peace between the brothers was followed by war, in which the young Henry and Geoffrey, secretly aided by Philip Augustus, fought against their father and Richard; and once at Limoges the old king came near to losing his life at the hands of his unfilial sons.

Much to Henry's grief, the eldest of the sons died of dysentery during the war (June 1183). His death brought on another complication. Richard was now his father's heir, and the old king proposed that he should take the same position as his eldest brother had held and that Aquitaine should pass to John. But Richard refused to surrender the duchy, and Henry thereupon ordered Geoffrey and John to march against him. Richard was a fine soldier and quickly had the better of the war; and his father gave way. In 1185 John was made Lord of Ireland, and sent to govern his new principality. A year later Geoffrey died. The narrowing of the family circle had at least the advantage of making life somewhat easier for the old king.

Until 1186 Philip Augustus's hands were tied by a dispute with Count Philip of Flanders, and consequently he had not been able to embarrass Henry. But the composure of his differences with the Flemish count left him free to pursue his plans to curb the power of the Angevins, whose possessions were a constant menace to the French crown, and he soon found grounds for picking a quarrel with Henry. He demanded the return of the Vexin to France: it was the marriage portion of his sister Margaret, the widow of the young Henry. He claimed the guardianship of Geoffrey's baby son Arthur, the heir to Brittany;

and urged that Richard should marry without further delay his youngest sister Alais to whom he had been betrothed for many years.

In fairness to Henry it must be admitted that he did his best to avoid a clash with his suzerain. He said that Richard had refused to marry Alais; but he was willing that she should be betrothed to John; and promised that Aquitaine should be settled on them and their heirs. Philip Augustus lost no time in acquainting Richard of these proposals, and believing that his father meant to dispossess him of Aquitaine he readily consented to join the French king in a war against Henry. The news that the Saracens had taken Jerusalem and had desecrated the Holy Place brought a terrible anguish to Christendom. Richard with characteristic impetuosity took the Cross: his father and Philip Augustus followed his example; and on both sides of the Channel preparations were made for a crusade.

While Henry was in England supervising these preparations news came that some of the Aquitainian barons were in revolt against Richard; and this complication was followed by a clash between Richard and Philip Augustus. Loyally the old king went to his son's assistance. At Richard's suggestion Henry met Philip Augustus at Bonmoulins on 18th November 1188, and found that he had been most shamefully tricked. The French king and his son presented him with their ultimatum: Richard was to be married to Alais and acknowledged as Henry's heir, and was to be put in possession of Anjou, Maine, Poitou, and Touraine. The old king contemptuously rejected these terms. Richard thereupon pledged himself to be Philip Augustus' man for all the Angevin possessions in France; and the two friends rode away to make ready for an attack on Henry. In June they invaded Maine and hurled themselves against Le Mans. To cover his retreat Henry fired the town, and as he saw the flames consume his birthplace, he said: "God, I will requite thee for this as best I can; thou hast taken from me what I prized the most, and I will take from thee what thou prizest most in me, my soul." Disappointment and sickness broke Henry's spirit, and there was nothing for him to do but to come to terms with Philip Augustus and Richard. On 4th July 1189 they met to be reconciled between Tours and Azay. As he gave Richard the kiss of peace the old king was heard to mutter a terrible curse: "may God not let me die till I am worthily revenged on thee."

Henry was a dying man when he yielded to the demands which the French king and his son placed before him; and when he learnt that John, the son whom he loved most dearly, was in league with his enemies, the old king's heart was broken. Those about him saw that death was imminent, and urged him to send for a priest to make his peace with God. In anguish he cursed God. "Why should I reverence Christ? Why should I do Him honour who has taken all honour from me?" But a priest came and comforted him; and on 6th July

Henry passed to his rest, murmuring in his final moments, "Shame on a conquered king!" Two days later his bastard son Geoffrey, the only member of his family who was present to console him on his death-bed, carried the body for burial to the conventual church of the nuns at Fontévrault.

RICHARD I. WAS crowned at Westminster on 3rd September 1189. To everyone's surprise he was a changed man. The wild young adventurers who had been the friends of his youth soon learnt that there were no rewards for them. Those who had served his father faithfully were either retained in their offices or promoted. One thought dominated Richard's mind—the infidel Saracens must be expelled from the Holy City; and he was conceited enough to believe that he was the only man to confer this boon on Christendom. Money was his great need. The fortune which he had inherited from his father, estimated at 100,000 marks, was insufficient to finance the venture. Everything that he could sell was therefore sold—"castles, villes, and farms." William the Lion of Scotland paid 10,000 marks to be quit of the homage which he owed the English king. Geoffrey, Heny II.'s son, gave £3000 for the right of being presented to the vacant archbishopric of York. Faint-hearted barons who shirked the rigours of a crusade were released from their vows at a price. Townsmen added to their privileges by payments to the king. When Richard's friends remonstrated with him for sacrificing so much, he laughingly told them that he would sell London itself if he could find "a purchaser rich enough." So a great armament was made ready, and on 11th December 1189 Richard crossed the Channel on the first stage of his journey to Palestine. Before he left England, however, he had taken measures for the proper governance of the kingdom during his absence. The office of justiciar was shared between Hugh Puiset, Bishop of Durham, and William de Mandeville, Earl of Essex; the chancellor was William of Longchamp; and promises were extracted from John and this half-brother Geoffrey that they would not enter the country while Richard was away.

Richard was a kingly figure. He was tall and well-proportioned, standing over six feet in height; he was ruddy complexioned and wore a beard. All his life he had been an adventurer, though it seems that he never was robust; and in war his reckless bravery and competent leadership had marked him down as one of the ablest captains of his age. In the Gascon country he had come into contact with the roistering troubadours: he loved their songs and music, and appreciated witty talk. Indeed Richard himself had a nimble wit which often disconcerted his critics. In the last year of his life, for example, he showed that he was more than a match for the preacher Fulk de Neuilly. The preacher came to lecture him, and in the presence of the court bade Richard "give in marriage his three evil daughters." "Thou liest," retorted the king, "for I

have no daughters." "In sooth," said Fulk, "thou hast three evil daughters—pride and avarice and luxury." With a twinkle in his eye Richard replied: "I will give my pride to the Templars, my avarice to the Cistercians, and my luxury to the bishops." His enemies accused him of insincerity, and one dubbed him *Richard Yea and Nay*. It was a failing which he shared with other members of his family. Like so many of his contemporaries he was immoral; but he also was capable of a fine generosity in his dealings with men; and he seldom bore an open enemy a grudge or resented the criticism of a well-wisher. It is true that his character deteriorated somewhat as a result of his service in Palestine: in later life he was apt to fly into violent tempers, during which he was not responsible for his words or actions; and his greed of wealth became almost maniacal. But to the end he remained a first-rate military organiser, whose courage was an inspiration to his followers; and his fame as a leader of men endured long after his death, and in the homes of Islam was cunningly used by mothers to exact obedience from their children.

On 13th January 1190 Richard and Philip Augustus met at Gué St Remi: they pledged themselves as brothers-in-arms, swearing to defend each other's realms as they would their own, and promising to divide their conquests equally; and it was agreed that they should make an early start for the East. Early in July they met again at Vézelay, where they renewed their pledges to each other. Philip Augustus thereupon marched to Genoa, Richard to Marseilles; and in September they once again joined forces in Sicily. The French king urged an immediate departure for the Holy Land: Richard, on the other hand, found that there was work for him to do in Sicily. The ruler of the island was Tancred, an illegitimate son of William II. of Sicily, whose wife was Richard's sister Joan. William was a miser, and it was said that on his death-bed he had left his great horde of treasure to his father-in-law, Henry II., to be used by him for a crusade. Richard, therefore, claimed the treasure; and when Tancred refused to hand it over the English king turned his soldiers against Messina, which they captured, so a contemporary said, "more quickly than a priest can say his mattins." Tancred made his peace: he promised to pay Richard 40,000 ounces of gold; and Richard agreed that his nephew Arthur of Brittany should be betrothed to Tancred's daughter.

But the stay in Sicily proved fatal to the success of the crusade. In the first place Richard had offended the Emperor Henry VI. The latter claimed Sicily in the right of his wife: Richard by his treaty with Tancred had virtually confirmed the usurper in possession of the island. Secondly, Philip Augustus claimed one-half of the booty which had been taken by Richard's men at the capture of Messina. The English king admitted the justice of the claim; but his followers never forgot that the Frenchmen had refused to assist them in their attack on the place, and the recriminations which passed between the

two parties led to the bitterest of feeling. It was in Tancred's interests to set the two crusading leaders against each other; and in March 1191 he accused Philip Augustus of plotting to deliver a surprise attack on Richard's camp. The French king strenuously denied the charge, but Richard made it an excuse for breaking off his betrothal to Alais, and openly announced his intention of marrying Berengaria of Navarre.

The French force left Sicily for Palestine on 31st March: Richard followed on 10th April. But a violent storm scattered the English ships, and those which were driven on to the shores of Cyprus were shamelessly pillaged and their crews thrown into prison by the Cypriots. Richard was furious at this violation of the rule that pilgrims were not to be molested, and he determined to punish the ruler of the island, Isaac Comnenus. The Cypriots were no match for Richard and his men, and Cyprus passed by conquest into the English king's possession. Later he was to sell it to the Knights Templar. It was during his stay in Cyprus that Richard married Berengaria (May 12).

On 8th June the English contingent was landed at Acre. "I do not believe," wrote one who witnessed the arrival of Richard, "that there has ever been seen or can be described such joy as there was at the coming of the king. The bells pealed, the trumpets blared, they sang for joy; each man made merry in his own fashion." And in the ranks of the Saracen army there was great dismay, for Richard's fame as a soldier had gone before him. But his arrival only served to intensify the dissension which prevailed among the crusaders. There were two claimants for the kingdom of Jerusalem—Guy of Lusignan and Conrad of Montferrat. Richard supported Guy; Philip, Conrad; and the rivalry between the two kings was sharp and dangerous. Moreover, the French king demanded that he should receive half of Cyprus: Richard retaliated by claiming half of Flanders which had escheated to Philip on the death of Count Philip. An open breach was prevented by fever: for days both Richard and Philip Augustus lay dangerously ill in their tents.[1]

Men pleaded with them to sink their differences and to assist in the efforts which were being made to dispossess the infidels of Acre. Both rose to the occasion, though Philip Augustus could no longer forgive his former friend. Sick though Richard was, he directed the operations of the besieging army, being carried through the lines in a litter; and it was told how, propped up on silken cushions, he plied a crossbow against the defenders on the walls. On 12th July Acre surrendered. The garrison were promised their lives on the understanding that Saladin would surrender the True Cross and liberate a number of Christian prisoners. When these conditions were not fulfilled Richard ordered a massacre of the captured Saracens: he could at least defend

[1] It was on this occasion that Saladin sent Richard gifts of fruit and snow, and even promised to allow his own physician to attend to him.

Effigy at Fontevrault.

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RICHARD I.

his act by saying that a similar treatment had been meted out to the Knights Templar and Knights Hospitaller after the famous battle of Tiberias.

No sooner was Acre in the hands of the crusaders than Richard was involved in a dispute with Leopold Duke of Austria. The ducal banner had been planted on a house in the town to which one of Richard's knights had a prior claim; and the English king, who detested the imperious Leopold, ordered the banner to be torn down and thrown into the public sewer. So Leopold returned to his native land, and he was soon followed by Philip Augustus (August 1191). At the end of August Richard led the army towards Ascalon. The heat was terrific; there was a shortage of food for the men and provender for the horses; the Saracens hung desperately on their flanks. Richard was the life and soul of the little army, and his fine courage did much to enable the men to endure the rigours of the march. At Arsuf, on 7th September, he won a brilliant victory over Saladin, and opened the road to Jaffa. During the autumn the crusaders were in winter quarters at Ramleh making ready for the advance to Jerusalem; and by the end of December Richard had led them to Beit-Nuba, which lay only twelve miles distant from the Holy City. Everyone clamoured for an immediate advance: Richard, on the other hand, urged a retreat to Ascalon. His decision was bitterly criticised; but there is no doubt that it was rightly made, for Saladin had a large army in the field, and would have used it to harass the force conducting the siege of Jerusalem.

Again the ranks of the crusaders were weakened by dissension. The French and English quarrelled and refused to fight alongside each other. Conrad of Montferrat played for his own hand, even to the extent of attempting to make an alliance with the Saracens. Richard did his best to infuse unity into the crusading force; but he himself was too much of a partisan altogether to escape the petty rivalries; and ill-health, the outcome of the climate, often interfered with his peacemaking efforts. Moreover, he was disturbed by the news which came from England, where John was working to rob him of his kingdom, and he knew that it was his duty to return home. But before he went he would at least lead one further attack against the infidel armies holding the road to Jerusalem. He made his peace with Conrad of Montferrat, acknowledging him as king of Jerusalem, and solaced Guy of Lusignan with the lordship of Cyprus. Conrad was murdered at the end of April 1192, and it was whispered that Richard knew more about the crime than he cared to divulge; and when Henry of Champagne was chosen as Conrad's successor he did not hesitate to accept the arrangement.

Beit-Nuba was reached by the middle of June. Richard went forward to Emmaus to view the fortifications of the Holy City: there a sense of abject unworthiness overcame him, and, placing his shield before his face, he prevented

himself from gazing upon the place where Christ had lived and suffered. Why the attack was not pushed home from Beit-Nuba is one of those historical mysteries which will probably for ever remain unsolved. Saladin was certainly then at a disadvantage owing to the loss of his supplies, and he breathed a sigh of relief when he saw the crusaders making off back towards Acre. Saladin opened negotiations, but the crusaders would not accept his terms. An attempt to seize Jaffa was frustrated by Richard, who with a handful of men hurled the Saracens out of the town, and he followed up this exploit by a reckless counter-attack on the besieging army. "Never even at Roncevaux," wrote Amboise, "did any man, young or old, Christian or Paynim, so bear himself as the king upon that day." Fever again laid him low, and he was eager to return home. In October, therefore, he came to terms with Saladin; and on the 9th he sailed for home, bitterly disappointed that he had failed to win back for Christendom the city dearest to the hearts of Christians.

Driven by storm and shipwreck out of his course, Richard tried to make his way home through Germany; but in an inn on the outskirts of Vienna he was recognised though he was disguised as a scullion; and, brought before the Duke of Austria, he was sent a prisoner to the castle of Durrenstein (December 1192). On the understanding that part of the ransom should go to the ducal coffers, his captor handed Richard over to the Emperor Henry VI.; and it was not until March 1194 that he secured his release. He paid dearly for his freedom, for both the emperor and the duke had old scores to pay off: one-third of his ransom of 150,000 marks was paid before he left German soil, and homage was done to Henry for England.

During his absence things had gone from bad to worse in England. John had ousted William of Longchamp from the control of the government, and openly attempted to make himself master of the island. He was ably supported in his treachery by Philip Augustus; and there is good reason for thinking that he actually did homage for Richard's lands to the French king. The restraining influence of his mother and the resolute opposition of Walter de Coutances, Archbishop of Rouen, who had succeeded Longchamp as justiciar, thwarted his treacherous designs; and when Richard returned to England he soon made himself undisputed master of the kingdom. And, strangely enough, he forgave John.

The situation on the other side of the Channel was infinitely worse. Philip Augustus had made serious inroads into Richard's vast possessions; and as soon as he had arranged for the government of the country and collected all the available wealth in the treasury the king went overseas to deal with his crafty suzerain. For the five remaining years of his reign Richard was engaged in intermittent war with Philip Augustus, and England never saw him again. Early in April 1199 he was mortally wounded by a bolt from a crossbow while

attacking the castle of Chaluz, whose owner had refused to surrender to him as treasure-trove a golden ornament turned up by one of his servants when ploughing; and on the 6th he died. Just before the end came Chaluz fell, and they brought the crossbowman to the tent of the dying king. "It is thou," said the man, never for a moment expecting mercy, "who didst slay my father and brothers; now slay me also. I do not fear thy tortures." But Richard's reply to this outburst was an order for the man's release.[1] They buried the king's body "at the feet of his father" in the nuns' church at Fontévrault, his heart "in the faithful city of Rouen."

Though Richard gave little thought to England, and consistently sublimated her interests to his continental ambitions, it is possible to look back on his reign and admire the solid achievements which were made in the cause of constitutional government. The deposition of the arrogant William of Longchamp might by a stretch of the imagination be regarded as the first triumph of the principle of ministerial responsibility. The refusal of the saintly Hugh of Avalon, Bishop of Lincoln, to send his quota of knights to fight with Richard in Normandy was probably nothing more than the defence of a time-honoured feudal principle—that knights were not required to follow their liege lord overseas; but it was an example of successful opposition to the crown (1197). The appointment of coroners, whose business it was to decide what were the pleas of the crown and to see that they were reserved for hearing before the justices, not only acted as an additional check on baronial jurisdictions, but was also an admission of the right of freemen to participate in government, since these new officers were elected by those who owed suit to the shire courts (1194).

JOHN WAS HENRY II.'s favourite son, and as a child he was petted and spoilt. Herein lies the explanation of his failure as a king. Carefully brought up, probably by Ranulf de Glanvil, he was perhaps the cleverest of the Angevins; but like most spoilt children he was petulant and headstrong; and the indulgence which he enjoyed in his boyhood was undoubtedly responsible for complete indifference to the moral code. Like the other male members of his family he was strongly built, though rather shorter in stature than his brothers; he was a cheerful companion, with a particular liking for music; and he loved the good things of life. In many respects he was as capable a soldier as his brother Richard, and few of his contemporaries could claim a greater knowledge of the perplexing details of military science; but he was bone lazy; and a lack of balance, amounting almost to childishness, caused him to throw away what advantages came his way.

[1] The wretched man, however, was sent to Richard's sister, Joanna of Toulouse, and by her commands was mutilated, flayed, and torn asunder by wild horses.

Though Henry II. had nicknamed John *Sans Terre* or *Lackland* when he was a boy, he nevertheless bestowed upon him valuable lands in England, Anjou, Maine, Normandy, and Touraine; and, as we have seen, he manœuvred to arrange for him a brilliant marriage, which was meant to give him control of Maurienne. In 1176, however, John was betrothed to Isabella, the heiress of William, Earl of Gloucester, and on the solemnisation of the marriage, the young prince was master of the extensive estate of the Gloucester earldom. But even Henry II. must have trembled for the future of this favourite son when he was told of his frivolous behaviour in Ireland—how John and his companions had tweaked the beards of the Irish chieftains when they came to make their submission to him as Lord of Ireland; how the money which formed his war chest had been squandered upon frivolous pleasures in Dublin instead of being used to pay troops for the pacification of the island (1185); and it will be recalled that it was the news of John's treachery which broke his father's heart as he lay dying at Chinon after his humiliation by Richard and Philip Augustus of France. Nor was John's behaviour during Richard's reign other than despicable. He strove to undermine the authority of his absent brother, openly consorting with his deadliest enemies; and during the brief period when the power was in his hand he showed that reckless indifference to personal liberty and senseless cruelty which eventually lost him the affection of his subjects both in England and on the Continent.

It was characteristic of John that on receiving the news of Richard's death he should send for Bishop Hugh of Lincoln and in his company should make a solemn pilgrimage to the tombs of his father and brother at Fontévrault. He was full of good intentions, and for three days he behaved like a model king. But the calls of the flesh were always irresistible to John, and despite the admonitions of the saintly bishop he reverted to his old habits with such zest that even his companions were shocked by his lack of moderation. He reached England on 25th April, and two days later was crowned at Westminster by Hubert Walter, the primate, who used the occasion to drive home the fact that the new king was the choice of the English nation and to remind him of his kingly obligations. John was in the mood to promise anything, and on the Gospels swore to rule justly and well; but he left the abbey church without communicating at the Mass which formed part of the coronation ceremony; and it is said that to his friends he made some indecent jests about the archbishop.

There was a good reason for Hubert Walter stressing the fact that John was the duly elected king of England. Some preferred to believe that Arthur, the son of Geoffrey Plantagenet, had the stronger claim to be regarded as Richard's heir; and the barons in Brittany, Anjou, Maine, and Touraine had already taken their stand on the feudal rule that the son of an elder brother

took precedence over a younger brother. Normandy, however, accepted John as duke; and Aquitaine was held by his mother. The prospect of a disputed succession was naturally attractive to Philip Augustus: he saw in the war which must follow the chance of being able to weaken the English king's position on the Continent.

John was in a strong position. Richard had bound England, Flanders, and the Empire in a league against the French king; and John maintained his policy. War broke out, and Philip intervened on Arthur's behalf; but the risk of a Flemish and German attack on France made the French king only too eager for peace; and early in 1200 a treaty was signed at Le Goulet between John and his suzerain. With minor modifications Philip Augustus recognised John's right to succeed to Richard's continental possessions; the English king promised to break off the alliance with Flanders and the Empire; and John's niece Blanche of Castile was to be married to Philip Augustus' son and heir Louis.

But John stupidly threw away the advantage which he had gained at Le Goulet. His marriage to Isabella of Angoulême made a dangerous enemy of Hugh le Brun, eldest son of Hugh IX., Count of La Marche; and the result was a rising of the barons of Poitou against him. Philip Augustus made every appearance of being willing to mediate between John and his Poitevin vassals, but actually he was secretly urging them to continue their resistance, and when John proposed to substitute trial by battle for trial by peers the Poitevin lords appealed to the French king. In April 1202 Philip Augustus ordered John to appear at his court to answer the charges made against him. John refused to obey the summons; and war was begun. At the outset luck was with him. At one stroke he captured not only the leaders of the Poitevin revolt, but also Arthur of Brittany, as they lay around the castle of Mirabeau which was defended by his mother. Hugh le Brun was released: Arthur was clapped into prison. But John's treatment of the proud Poitevin nobles turned the scales against him. He subjected them to every indignity, and starved to death twenty-two who were unable to pay the ransoms demanded from them; and when the news went round what manner of man he was the barons in his other continental possessions began to think that they would be better off under the rule of the French king. No one knows precisely what happened to Arthur; but apparently he was blinded soon after his capture; and the story which was popularly believed at that time was that John had murdered the boy with his own hands. The result of Arthur's death was to give Philip Augustus the support of the Bretons and Angevins. French troops were poured into John's continental lands, and by the end of 1203 the greater part of Normandy was in Philip Augustus' hands. John did little to stem the French advance, and early in December he was back in England, having

abandoned the Normans to their fate. By the middle of June 1204 Normandy was lost to England, and by the end of the year all that remained of the great Angevin empire for which Henry II. and Richard had fought so strenuously were Gascony and a part of Poitou.

The importance of this disaster should not be lost sight of. Actually for England it was a blessing in disguise. She was no longer merely a province in a great empire whose rulers were more continental than English in their outlook. Barons whose lands lay on both sides of the Channel had now to make their choice: would they be English or French? The real weight of the blow fell upon John himself. His personal prestige was shattered, and as a result the power of the crown was diminished: the former encouraged the barons to resist his reckless rule; and the latter enabled them to wring from the crown concessions which were destined to become the foundation of personal and constitutional liberty in England.

Until 1204 John had left the government of England to the justiciar, Geoffrey fitzPeter, and the chancellor, Hubert Walter. The former had done his best to give the country peace: he conciliated the baronage, and fostered trade. But beneath the surface of English life there was considerable unrest. The barons chafed under the checks put on their power by royal officials; the people groaned under the burden of taxation which was imposed upon them in consequence of the struggle with Philip Augustus. In 1201 the barons had protested against a call for military service; and four years later they refused point blank to join John in a descent upon France.

Shortly after the latter quarrel Hubert Walter died. "Now for the first time I am king in England," said John when they brought him the news of the primate's death; and he celebrated his freedom by a blunder which alienated the power of the Papacy from him. John wished to send John de Gray, Bishop of Norwich, to Canterbury; but the monks of Christ Church, to whom belonged the right of nominating the primate, elected their sub-prior Reginald, and to outwit the king sent him to Rome to obtain confirmation of his appointment from Innocent III. John was furious at this affront, and the Canterbury monks deemed it wiser not only to repudiate Reginald's election but also to elect John de Gray as Hubert Walter's successor. Innocent III. wanted neither candidate: he had in view for the post of spiritual head of the Church in England a man who could be relied upon to uphold the Church's privileges. He therefore induced John to allow a deputation of monks from Canterbury to go to Rome to make the election in his presence, and they were to be accompanied by representatives of the bishops and baronage to confirm the appointment. The monks were strictly warned that they must choose none other than John de Gray, and John believed that he would have no difficulty in gaining his point. But Innocent persuaded the monks to elect as archbishop his own candidate,

the English cardinal, Stephen Langton; and although some of the baronial representatives protested at the choice, Innocent confirmed the election and invested Langton with the *pallium*.

Innocent III.'s action was indefensible: he had violated the principle of free election. Wordy arguments followed. Innocent III. pleaded that he had chosen for the office of archbishop a distinguished Englishman, whom John had already praised for his scholarly attainments: the English king replied by charging the monks with perjury, thereby admitting that he himself had attempted to do that which he condemned in the Pope—to violate the principle of free election. Innocent III. was reminded that the Papacy derived considerable revenues from England, and was plainly told that if the election was not set aside these funds might be put to another purpose. But the Pope would not yield; and John promptly sequestrated the lands of Christ Church. Innocent III. replied with the threat of an interdict. For a moment John tried to come to terms, but the Pope meant not to be satisfied with less than a complete submission; and when the English king would not accept the papal terms the interdict was enforced (1213).

Actually the real burden of this awful punishment fell upon the clergy, for among the laity there was a widespread feeling that Innocent III. had acted in a very high-handed way; and although the suspension of the customary services of the Church was generally deplored, the inconvenience was cheerfully suffered owing to the fact that John's ruthless spoliation of ecclesiastical property reduced somewhat the calls upon the pockets of ordinary citizens. Moreover, John did not shrink from carrying the war into his enemies' camps. He struck swiftly at the discontented barons; bought the friendship of Scotland; secured the submission of the princes of Wales; and pacified Ireland. "All men bore witness that never since the time of Arthur was there a king who was so greatly feared in England, in Wales, in Scotland, or in Ireland." Such was the verdict of a contemporary, and it acquires even greater force when it is remembered that in November 1213 Innocent III. had published a decree excommunicating John.

To safeguard his position the unhappy king made a lavish use of bribes; but to meet the heavy drain on his wealth he was compelled to resort to all sorts of devices for the raising of money. Scutages at a higher rate than in former reigns were levied; feudal dues were narrowly exacted; the shires were "farmed" by rapacious officials; the countryside was ravaged by bands of lawless mercenaries. Nothing did more to alienate public opinion than John's brutal treatment of Matilda de Braose and her young son. "When the king returned to England (from Ireland)," wrote the author of *Histoire des Ducs*, "he imprisoned Matilda de Braose and her son William in the castle of Corfe; they were given a sheaf of oats and a flitch of raw bacon; this was all the meat

they were allowed. On the eleventh day the mother was found dead between the knees of her son, sitting upright except that she leaned back against her son like a dead woman. The son was dead in like manner, save that he was leaning back against the wall; and his cheeks had been gnawed by his mother in her anguish."

John had planned to invade France during the summer of 1212; but in May the princes of Wales under the capable leadership of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth rose in revolt against the English in the principality; and when John prepared to crush them he learnt that many of the English barons were ready to rise against him. In his extremity he endeavoured to win over to his side the poorer people by promising them better government; but his promises of concessions came too late. The truth was that no one trusted him. However, for the moment he cowed his enemies by stern measures.

Early in April 1213 Philip Augustus agreed to the papal proposal that the French should invade England; and arrangements were made for the French king's eldest son Louis to lead the expedition. John was at the end of his tether, and he lost no time in making his submission to Innocent III. Stephen Langton was to be accepted as archbishop and the king's adviser; restitution was promised for the damage done to ecclesiastical property during the interdict; the exiled clergy were to be allowed to return to England. On 15th May, two days after he had accepted these terms, John agreed that England should be a fief of the Papacy, held at a rental of 1000 marks. His action had deprived Philip Augustus of a legitimate excuse for invading England. But the French king was not to be so easily put off: his plan was to attack the island kingdom by way of Flanders whose count was one of John's allies. The danger, however, was removed by William de Longespée, Earl of Salisbury and Warden of the Cinque Ports, who burnt or sunk about 100 French transports and captured a further 300 at Damme.

John was obsessed with a desire to win back his lost continental possessions: his English subjects were equally determined that they would not be involved in a foreign war. John thereupon decided to use mercenaries, and the English barons at once suspected that these paid troops might at any moment be turned against them. None resisted the king more resolutely than the aged Geoffrey fitzPeter, but he died in October 1213; and the office of justiciar was bestowed upon Peter des Roches who was one of John's dearest friends. But in Stephen Langton the country found a champion who was capable of withstanding an obstinate king and of giving the opposition to his rule a truly national complexion. John hoped that a spectacular triumph over Philip Augustus would act as a powerful set-off against the unrest in the baronage; but his hopes were dashed to the ground by the defeat of his allies, the emperor Otto IV. and the Count of Flanders, at Bouvines in July 1214: and on his return

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JOHN.

to England he had to meet the united opposition of his discontented subjects.

At Bury St. Edmunds the barons had sworn over the sacred relics in the conventual church that John should know no peace until he had pledged himself to observe the charter of Henry I. They presented him with their terms early in 1215, and gave him until Easter to think matters over. In vain did Innocent III. intervene on his behalf by ordering Stephen Langton to detach himself from the opposition, and when John refused to accept the baronial terms Robert fitzWalter, who had been chosen the "Marshal of the Host of the Lord and Holy Church," marched on London. John retreated westward: the barons had no difficulty in making themselves masters of the capital. On 17th June at Runnymede, between Staines and Windsor, John made his submission when he sealed Magna Carta.

Space does not permit of a detailed consideration of this famous document which is the foundation of the Englishman's liberties. Sufficient must it be to say that the terms which John assented to were conservative, and introduced few innovations, except that the power of the crown was limited in the interests of the baronage. But the barons were now more English than they had been when England and Normandy were united in the person of one ruler; and the concessions which they wrung from John were virtually gains for the people of England and not for a particular class of the community. John's capitulation had been brought about by the united opposition of the nation—of the clergy, barons, and commons; and it has been truthfully said that *Magna Carta* was "the first public act of the nation after it had realised its own identity." To ensure that John kept his pledges the barons elected a council of twenty-five which was permitted to redress by force any violation of the charter.

John never intended keeping the promises which he had made under duress at Runnymede, and he at once worked to regain the power which had been taken from him. In August, Innocent III., as overlord of England, annulled the recent proceedings on the ground that *Magna Carta* infringed the legitimate rights of the crown; and when his decision was ignored some of the baronial leaders were excommunicated and Stephen Langton was suspended. Heartened by this, John collected an army of mercenaries and made ready to fight for his rights; but the barons met this move with an invitation to Louis of France to come to their aid; and it was understood that the French prince would claim the English throne through his wife who was Henry II.'s granddaughter.

The first French contingent landed in January 1216: Louis himself with a much larger force followed in May. London was immediately secured: a month later Winchester was taken. John was not in a position to risk a battle and lurked in the neighbourhood of Corfe. Many Englishmen were not happy at the sight of a foreign army in their and, and during the summer months

the king received valuable offers of support even from those who had hitherto opposed him. In Sussex the freeman Willekin of the Weald with a band of desperate men harassed the foreigners: Hubert de Burgh's stubborn defence of Dover inspired the people of Kent to resist the invaders. Failing to relieve his castle at Windsor, John turned north to stand between London and the northern shires in which lay the lands of the chief leaders of the baronial opposition. He raised the siege of Lincoln, and energetically pacified the eastern counties; but in crossing the Wash he lost all his baggage and some of his men, and he was much put out by the disaster. About 10th October he was stricken down with the "flux," brought on by stuffing himself with peaches and new ale while he stayed with the monks at Swineshead. Another story, however, states that he was poisoned by one of the monks when it was learnt that the king planned to violate a nun in a neighbouring convent. In great pain John went on to Newark, where he made his will and nominated his young son Henry as his successor. On 19th October he died, and his body was taken for burial in the sanctuary of the cathedral church at Worcester.

ONE MAN HAD remained loyal to John throughout all his misfortunes. He was William Marshal, who had become Earl of Pembroke and Lord of Striguil on his marriage to Strongbow's heiress Isabella in the closing years of Henry II.'s reign. He was no worthless sycophant: more than once he had opposed John's reckless plans; but he had never forfeited the king's confidence; and it is a tribute to his greatness of character that he was universally admired for his courage and absence of vindictiveness. John had named William Marshal one of the executors of his will, and there is no doubt that at the same time he had charged him to look after his nine-years-old son Henry *of Winchester*. It was a task from which a younger man might have shrank, but loyalty to the crown had been the guiding principle of William Marshal's life; and although he was eighty years old when John died he undertook to guard the boy Henry with his life.

After John's burial the boy Henry was taken to Gloucester, where in the priory church Peter des Roches, Bishop of Winchester, crowned him by placing a hoop of gold upon his head, and the handful of bishops and barons who formed the royal party swore allegiance to him (28th October 1216). A fortnight later a great council was held at Bristol: William Marshal was chosen regent, with the title of *Rector Regis et Regni*; the young king was committed to the care of Peter des Roches; Hubert de Burgh was retained in the office of justiciar; and it was tacitly assumed that the papal legate, Cardinal Gualo, would share with them the duties of the regency. But the supreme administrative power was vested in William Marshal; and upon him therefore devolved the arduous business of terminating the civil war which not only brought so much suffering

to the people, but introduced into the kingdom a foreign prince who was bent upon gaining the crown for himself.

The accession of the boy king completely changed the political situation in England. His father's friends were now the champions of constitutional government; and the party which had opposed John's tyranny were the supporters of an alien invader. William Marshal rose to the occasion: he announced that the new government wished to forget the past; and reissued the Charter, omitting, it is true, certain clauses but at the same time promising that they should be reconsidered when Henry came of age. His conciliatory measures won friends even from among those who were pledged to Louis; and Gualo improved the situation when at the Pope's orders he preached a crusade against the French prince and his friends. Louis, as it happened, played into William Marshal's hands when at the beginning of 1217 he agreed to a truce to last until Easter; it gave the waverers time to test the quality of the government's measures, and enabled the young king's friends to make ready for the final stages of the struggle. In May 1217 William Marshal and Peter des Roches won a spectacular victory over the French and their English friends at Lincoln: there was no great loss of life, but many important prisoners were taken, and so considerable was the booty that the action was called "the Fair of Lincoln." This advantage was driven home by Hubert de Burgh's victory over Eustace the Monk off the estuary of the Thames, for it prevented the arrival of the French reinforcements and allowed the government to undertake the blockade of London from the side of the sea without fear of molestation. In September, therefore, Louis was driven to make terms; and peace was signed at Lambeth on the 11th. There could be no great outcry against the terms which William Marshal dictated: Louis' English followers were pardoned; and he himself received 10,000 marks to reimburse him for the expenses which he had incurred in coming to the assistance of the barons against John—but he was to leave the kingdom at once, and to renounce his claim to the throne. That was all that William Marshal wanted: once the country was cleared of the French he could proceed with the re-establishment of the machinery of government. The treaty was followed by a reissue of *Magna Carta* and by a new Charter of the Forest: the latter cancelled afforestations made since the time of Henry II., and mitigated the punishments for "the taking of our venison." It was a gesture which was highly appreciated by the people of England.

On William Marshal's death in 1219 the papal legate Pandulf endeavoured to make himself head of the regency government; but his claims were strenuously resisted by Peter des Roches and Hubert de Burgh; and the result was that the latter virtually assumed the position of regent, though his powers were not nearly so extensive as those exercised by his predecessor. It has been claimed that Hubert is "the first minister since the Conquest who made patriotism a

matter of policy:" he certainly strove to weaken the influence of the horde of foreigners who had come to England in John's reign; and it was not long before he was at loggerheads with Peter des Roches who was the leader of the foreign party. Hubert quickly put into full working order the administrative machinery which Henry II. had created; and he waged a ceaseless war against lawlessness. He was fortunate in having the support of Stephen Langton, who, on Pandulf's withdrawal from England, obtained from the Pope a promise that no other legate should be appointed during the archbishop's lifetime.

The rising of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth in Wales, which took the form of an attack on the Marshal interests in Pembroke, resulted in the sending of a punitive expedition into the principality. This was resented by some of the proud marcher lords, who had no wish to see an extension of the royal authority over marcher territory; and there was a move to make common cause with the Welsh. Hubert met the danger by a daring move: he secured papal approval for his plan by declaring Henry of age. This meant that all grants made during the regency were resumed by the crown, and Hubert was determined that the control of the more important castles should be vested in those barons of whose loyalty there was no doubt. Ranulf de Blundevill, Earl of Chester, and William de Fors, Earl of Aumâle, at once rose in revolt, and made a fruitless attempt to seize the Tower. Hubert cited them before the *Curia Regis* to explain their conduct; and when they appeared they not only defied their judges but also openly charged the justiciar with being a traitor. Hubert thereupon accused Peter des Roches of having incited the two earls to rebellion; and the bishop in a towering rage replied that he would hound the justiciar from office even if it cost him his last penny. Civil war was imminent, but Stephen Langton threatened the rebels with excommunication, and when they submitted they were deprived of many of those castles and offices which they had hitherto refused to surrender. To consolidate the crown's position in the marches of Wales, however, Hubert arranged the marriage of William Marshal the Younger to the King's sister Eleanor.

Among those who had been deprived of castles and offices was Falkes de Bréauté, the leader of John's mercenaries; and in 1124 he rose in rebellion, being secretly assured of the support of Peter des Roches and the Earl of Chester. But Hubert soon was master of the situation; the bishop and earl were too narrowly watched to be able to render any assistance to the rebel; and although the Pope pleaded Falkes' cause with the king, Hubert stripped him of his lands and drove him into exile. In 1227 Henry was declared free from the restrictions which had been placed upon him in 1223. This subtle move on Hubert's part deprived Peter des Roches of his post as royal tutor; and after a vain protest the bishop left the country to go on a crusade. The justiciar was left without a rival in the kingdom.

Nevertheless there was Henry to be reckoned with. The king was now in his twentieth year, and gave little promise of political sagacity. If he inherited none of his father's vicious habits, and was popularly revered for the goodness of his life, he had in full measure the Angevin defect of obstinacy: it rendered him insensible to the advice of those who genuinely had the good of his kingdom at heart; susceptibility to flattery placed him at the mercy of men who flattered him for motives of self-interest. Henry sincerely believed that out of gratitude for the noble way in which the papal power had been used to secure his peaceful accession he must carry out every wish of the Papacy. He was equally determined to recover the lost French provinces, and to found a new imperial dynasty; and having a high opinion of his own skill as a diplomat he was soon involved in mad-cap schemes which were rightly rejected by his own subjects.

Henry's desire to continue the war against France and his subservience to the Papacy did not meet with the approval of Hubert de Burgh. In 1229, however, Henry planned an attack on France, and an expeditionary force was collected. When he found that there were not sufficient ships to carry the men overseas, he accused Hubert of treachery, and in his rage even rushed upon him with drawn sword. The breach which was then created was never closed. The death of Stephen Langton in 1228 deprived Hubert of the support of a valuable ally and gave rise to increased papal encroachments. Matters came to a head when bands of Englishmen attacked foreign clerks and destroyed the property of absentee incumbents. The bishops who showed a willingness to institute papal nominees to English livings were threatened; and there is no doubt that the movement had the sympathetic support of many of the royal officials. Nor could Hubert himself honestly say that he disapproved of the action taken by his fellow-countrymen against the " provided " aliens.

The return of Peter des Roches in 1232 was the signal for the attack against Hubert's administration. He was charged with mismanagement of the finances; and the king, who disliked the way in which the justiciar cavilled at the money spent on the French wars, readily consented to place the treasury in the control of Peter des Riveaux, who was the nephew of Peter des Roches. In July 1232 Henry was emboldened summarily to dismiss Hubert, and to order him to account for all the monies which had passed through his hands since the death of William Marshal. He was subsequently faced with a long list of charges, many of which were frivolous; he was subjected to the indignity of having to ride through London on a broken-down nag with his feet tied beneath its belly, and sentenced to live in confinement at Devizes.

Hubert's fall marks the end of the system of the justiciars: for the future the government is controlled by a group of ministers attached to the court. The employment of the Poitevins resulted in a stern baronial protest voiced by Richard Marshal, Earl of Pembroke and Lord of Striguil; and Peter des

Roches's retort that the king had no other alternative when he could not trust his own subjects was a challenge which did not pass unheeded. In the summer of 1233 Richard Marshal and his friends, fearing treachery on the part of their enemies, fled to their marcher estates. Hubert de Burgh was liberated, and an alliance was made with Llywelyn ab Iorwerth. Henry led an expedition into Monmouthshire to crush the opposition; but he was no match for the rebels, and in a short time he had to admit defeat. Once again, the Church, through the mouth of the Archbishop of Canterbury, now the saintly Edmund Rich, championed the popular cause. The Poitevins were dismissed, and sent out of the country.

But Henry was too obstinate to benefit by this experience. On 14th January 1236 he married Eleanor, daughter of Raymond Berengar IV., Count of Provence, and niece of Amadeus IV., Count of Savoy, and there was another influx of foreigners into England. Henry could deny his wife's relations nothing, and showered his favours on her four Savoyard uncles, William, Thomas, Peter, and Boniface. The last-named became Archbishop of Canterbury on Edmund Rich's death in 1243, and it can at least be said in his favour that he was not afraid to oppose both his nephew and the Pope. There was a great deal of murmuring against these favourites; but Richard Marshal who had successfully led the opposition to the Poitevins was dead, and the baronage had no one in their ranks to take his place.

The continued encroachments of the Papacy were particularly obnoxious to Englishmen. When the papal legate, Cardinal Otho, came to the country in 1236 he found that it was unsafe to appear in London's streets without a bodyguard; and when he visited Oxford he was threatened with attack by a jeering crowd which yelled outside the gates of Oseney Abbey where he lodged—"where is the usurer, the simoniac?" A riot followed, during which a Welsh scholar picked off with an arrow the legate's cousin who was also his cook; and it required a presence of an armed force to restore order in the university city. The Pope's demand that three hundred Roman clerks should be "provided" with English livings raised a great outcry even in ecclesiastical circles in England; and none was louder in his condemnation of this sorry state of affairs than Robert Grosseteste, the scholarly Bishop of Lincoln, who boldly attacked the papal policy and refused point-blank to institute alien clerks to livings in his diocese.

The complete failure of Henry's foreign policy left him discredited in his own country. The French victories at Taillebourg and Saintes in 1242 compelled him to give up his claim to Poitou, and brought a host of Poitevin friends into England. In Wales Llwyelyn ap Gruffydd had thrown off his allegiance to the English king, and was virtually master of the principality. The acceptance of the throne of Sicily for his son Edmund Crouchback in 1254 brought him

into conflict with his barons in the following year when they refused to finance the Sicilian venture. The clergy did likewise; and a bad harvest in 1257 focused the attention of the country districts on the failure of the king to maintain an efficient system of government.

Curiously enough the leader of the revolt against Henry was himself one of the foreigners against whom Englishmen had inveighed so bitterly earlier in the reign—Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester. He had married Henry's sister Eleanor, the widow of William Marshal the Younger; and between 1248 and 1252 had governed Gascony for his brother-in-law. Charged by his Gascon enemies with harsh administration he was put on his trial, and when he was acquitted Henry refused to pay him the money which he had used out of his own pockets to maintain the royal government, sneeringly observing that he was not obligated to traitors. Sharp words followed, Earl Simon calling the king a liar, and reminding him that only his kingly office saved him from rueing his words. But it was not a personal quarrel which turned the earl into the champion of the popular party. He had been a firm friend of Grosseteste, and shared the bishop's views on the political situation.

Henry's failure to bring the Welsh into submission in 1257 was the signal for the baronial opposition to demand a better system of government. At a meeting of the Great Council held at the end of April 1258, the baronial ultimatum was delivered: Henry was to dismiss his foreign favourites; he was to accept a committee of twenty-four to inquire into grievances; and the report of this committee was to be brought before the council at Oxford on 11th June. The king offered no resistance; and the committee at once set to work.

The result was the acceptance by Henry of the *Provisions of Oxford*, which substituted a baronial oligarchy for a royal autocracy. Briefly, the system adopted was this: the royal power was vested in a Council of Fifteen, with complete administrative control, and in a parliament consisting of twelve barons, which met the former body thrice a year and ratified its acts. In fairness to the Earl Simon it can be said that he so much disliked the new constitution that he thought at one time of refusing to give his assent to the *Provisions of Oxford*. The revolution sent the foreign favourites helter-skelter out of the country; and it was generally believed in baronial circles that a new era was about to begin. In the first blush of enthusiasm the new government got down to work: peace with France at any price was the keynote of their foreign policy; and there was much talk about reform. A quarrel between Earl Simon and Richard of Clare, Earl of Gloucester, who had no intention of instituting reforms which minimised baronial authority, split the government into two parties.

Henry's eldest son, the Prince Edward, was quick to see the advantage

which this dissension gave his father's cause; and he cunningly set to work to break the power of the oligarchy. In October 1259 at a court held at Westminster in celebration of the festival of Edward Confessor a deputation of "the Bachelorhood of England" waited upon the prince. They informed him that the country was ill-pleased at the failure of the barons to carry out their promises, and hinted that if they did not do so the Commons would find means of redressing the grievances of the nation. Edward graciously informed them that he would champion the rights of the Commons, and laid the deputation's observations before the Council of Fifteen. Thereupon the barons gave way, and adopted the *Provisions of Westminster* which limited baronial jurisdictions.

Henry completely failed to understand his son's methods of dealing with the baronial opposition; and encouraged by Gloucester who was playing a double game he suspected that Edward wished to secure his abdication. In 1260 the king boldly shut himself in the Tower, and refused to see either his son or those barons who accepted the reforms. With some difficulty the prince made his peace; this necessitated a break with Earl Simon whom he had supported against the more reactionery barons. In the following year Henry secured a papal dispensation permitting him to cancel the reforms: he collected mercenaries, and announced that he was free to choose his own ministers. Both parties thereupon appealed to the country: the barons summoned three knights from every shire to St Albans to confer with them; and the king took a similar step, ordering the barons to meet him at Windsor. At Gloucester's suggestion the barons agreed to a compromise: the *Provisions* were to be revised. Earl Simon, however, refused to accept this decision, and left the country. On 2nd May 1262, therefore, Henry revoked the reforms.

On Gloucester's death in July Earl Simon returned, and at a council held in the autumn, when Henry was out of the kingdom, he put his views before the barons. In the following spring they invited him to be their leader. Earl Simon struck swiftly against the king's friends, and in July Henry came to terms. All aliens who still remained in the kingdom were to be banished; royal castles were to be garrisoned by the baronial party, the *Provisions* were to be observed without modification. Many believed that the king had been too harshly dealt with, and the country was reminded that the very man who had brought about his humiliation was himself a foreigner. By the end of the year the king's party had gained considerably in strength: to avoid an outbreak of civil war Earl Simon agreed to the royalist suggestion that all questions in dispute, including the *Provisions*, should be referred to the arbitration of Louis IX. of France.

The result was the *Mise of Amiens* which was communicated to the English

From the monument at Westminster.

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HENRY III.

In the work of pacification the Prince Edward had loyally assisted his father. In August 1270, however, he left the country to go on a crusade; and almost as soon as he had gone his father was taken ill. Throughout the winter of 1270–71 the king's health was in a very bad state, and on 6th February he wrote to Edward to tell him that the court physicians had abandoned hope of recovery. He rallied in the summer, but he was again attacked with illness towards the end of 1271, and for the remainder of his life he was an invalid, though once during the August before his death he went so far as to contemplate a trip to France to do homage for Aquitaine to Philip III. Henry died at Winchester on 16th November 1272. His body was buried at Westminster: his heart was sent to the Abbess of Fontévrault for burial in the convent church which was so dear to his Angevin ancestors.

As a king, Henry III. was a dismal failure. His subjects neither respected nor feared him; irresolution drove him to be shifty and false in his dealings with men, though morally his life was above suspicion and he had a great reverence for religion. It is true that he lived in an age of change; but his difficulties were chiefly of his own making, and his passion for foreign favourites was merely an indication of his lack of sympathy for England and her people. He had a keen appreciation of the arts and scholarship. The abbey church of Westminster was built at his orders and at his own cost; painters were employed to execute paintings for the adornment of the royal palaces; Matthew Paris was generously patronised; religious houses were benefited by his gifts and patronage. And despite his shameless extravagance he himself loved a simple life; he was a good husband and father; he talked well in company; and was courteous when not put out.

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CHAPTER III

THE PLANTAGENETS

Edward I. *Longshanks*: 1272–1307
Edward II. *of Caernarvon*: 1307–1327
Edward III. *of Windsor*: 1327–1377
Richard II. *of Bordeaux*: 1377–1399

"IF thou wouldst have a kingdom reverence the laws . . . they shine like a lamp: therefore avoid and detest treachery; labour after truth, and hate falsehood."

Such was the advice gratuitously offered in the *Song of Lewes* which men sung when the barons warred against Henry III. During his captivity after the fight at Lewes those words must have fallen on Edward's ears many times: it is to his credit that he heeded them. The unhappy experience of the Barons' War impressed the prince with the dangers inherent in a weak government; and he came to the throne determined to rule well and be the master of his own house. Fortunately he belonged to an age which extolled the orderly arrangement and precise definition of the law. Edward was not a brilliantly clever young man: he nevertheless grasped the truth that the narrower the definition of the law the fewer the opportunities for legal quibbles; and in a hard school he learnt that nothing more surely destroys respect for government than bad faith in the ruler himself. On the tomb which was raised over his body in Westminster were inscribed the two words, *pactum serva*, or *keep faith*; and it can at least be said of Edward that to the best of his ability he lived up to that motto during his reign of thirty-five years. The high moral tone of his domestic life compelled respect even from the lecherous who were the children of their age. His kingly name was music to the ears of the native English. It commemorated a native king whose "good law" was popularly held to represent the foundation stone of an Englishman's freedom; and it broke with the tradition of alien dynasties and their preference for *Guillaumes* and *Henris*.

Edward's birth in the royal palace at Westminster on 17th June 1239 was hailed with delight in the kingdom, for it had been whispered that either the queen was barren or the king impotent. On the 21st the baby was christened by the papal legate Cardinal Otho, who incidentally was not in priest's orders; and one of the sponsors was Simon de Montfort, then a great favourite of the

king. By all accounts Edward was a sickly child, and his babyhood was marred by childish ailments: in June 1246 he was taken dangerously ill during a visit to Beaulieu with his father and mother, and for a time the physicians thought he must die. In 1254 the young prince was married to Eleanor of Castile in the monastery church at Las Huelgas: after the ceremony his brother-in-law Alfonso X. of Castile knighted him; and when the young couple returned to England the old king bestowed upon Edward as a marriage portion Gascony, Ireland, Wales, Bristol, Stamford, and Grantham. Men marvelled at the royal generosity, and said that the grants made Henry no better "than a mutilated king."

Edward grew up to be a singularly attractive young man. He was tall and muscular, with long arms and raking thighs which enabled him to become an expert at sword-play and to ride the most spirited horse. His face was "shapely," with a particularly high forehead and delicately modelled nose and mouth; and from his father he inherited a curious drooping of the left eyelid. He was a fluent and persuasive talker, but his speech was indistinct. Able to make friends easily, he could inspire them with his own enthusiasm; and, unlike his father, he set a great store by faithful service to the crown. He was hot-tempered and passionate, but he seldom bore resentment for any length of time, though his subjects knew him for a stern, hard man.

Edward was at heart an adventurer. As a young man he developed a passion for the tournament, which since the days of Stephen was the fashionable pastime of young nobles; and nothing gave him greater delight than to organise these knightly amusements. As we have seen, he took an active part in the quarrel between his father and the popular party; the reputation which he won from his godfather's friends, however, was far from flattering, and they constantly accused him of being as faithless as his father. In August 1270 Edward left for a crusade to the Holy Land. It was arranged that he should meet the French king at Tunis, but when he arrived there he found that Louis was dead and his contingent was making ready to return to France. "By God's Blood," he swore when the French acquainted him with their plans, "though all my fellow-soldiers and countrymen desert me, I will enter Acre with Fowin, the groom of my palfrey, and I will keep my word and my oath to the death." And so he did. After wintering in Sicily he sailed for Palestine and relieved Acre (May 1271); he then took Nazareth; and the victory which he won at Haifa enabled him to push on and occupy Castle Pilgrim.

During the summer of 1272 Edward had a miraculous escape from death. An infidel messenger, carrying despatches from the Emir of Jaffa who wished to conclude a truce with the crusaders, attacked Edward with a poisoned dagger. After a fierce struggle the English prince managed to slay the murderer; but not before he himself had been severely wounded in the arm; and when the poison had

had time to do its work his condition was serious. "Can I not be cured?" he asked the surgeons who whispered gravely among themselves in his tent. "You can be cured," replied one of them, an Englishman, "but only with intense pain." Edward asked him what he meant by those words, and when he was told that the infected place must be cut out with a knife submitted cheerfully to the operation. The pretty story which tells how his queen Eleanor sucked the poison out of the wound is without historical foundation.

On conclusion of the truce with the infidels Edward left Palestine (August 1272). The homeward voyage through the Mediterranean seems to have been a hazardous one, for his ship took seven weeks to complete the journey to Sicily. But he was in no hurry to reach England, knowing that the country was well governed, and spent the winter of 1272-73 in Italy where he was everywhere fêted. After crossing the Alps he had an adventure which might have had a disastrous ending: invited by the Count of Châlons to engage in a mêlée he readily consented to do so, but the count basely turned a knightly exercise into a deadly combat (June 1273). In Paris, where he was again fêted for his exploits in Palestine, Edward did homage to Philip III. for the lands which he held of him in France, after which he proceeded to Gascony to crush a rebellion headed by the turbulent Gaston de Bearn; and it was not until the following summer that he was ready to leave for England. At Montreuil on his homeward journey he met the Count of Flanders, and together they composed a dispute between the English wool growers and the Flemish weavers.

Edward had been proclaimed king at Paul's Cross on the day of his father's funeral (20th November 1272). On the same day the barons, headed by Gilbert Earl of Gloucester, made a solemn profession of loyalty to the absent king, who, so they announced, succeeded to the throne "by hereditary right and the election of the magnates." Well governed though the kingdom had been while Edward was in Palestine, the people were nevertheless glad to have their king back in their midst; and they were particularly pleased at his three achievements—a good understanding with France, a pacified Gascony, and the settlement of the commercial dispute with Flanders. Edward and Eleanor were crowned at Westminster by Archbishop Kilwardby on 19th August 1274. Among those who attended the ceremony was Alexander III. of Scotland, who afterwards performed his homage. The barons also renewed their oaths of fealty. But there was one who put in no appearance at the coronation—Llywelyn ap Gruffydd of Gwynedd: an invitation had been sent to him, but he had ignored it.

The new king was determined to humble the Welsh prince whose avowed object was to unite Wales against the English. In 1275 he made his first move: he ordered the arrest of Eleanor, daughter of Simon de Montfort, as she travelled through England to marry Llywelyn ap Gruffyd. Two years later the first of the Welsh wars began. It was soon ended, and, by the Treaty of Conway,

Llywelyn undertook to do homage to Edward, renounce his feudal superiority over the other Welsh princes, pay an indemnity of 50,000 marks, and surrender the Perfeddwlad and the northern districts of Ceredigion (Cardigan).

Edward's next task was to consolidate his position in Wales. Two of the four cantreds of the Perfeddwlad were granted to Llywelyn's brother Dafydd, who was the Welsh prince's bitterest enemy; the other two cantreds were incorporated in the palatine earldom of Chester, which was in his own hands, and the northern part of Ceredigion was separately administered from Aberystwyth.[1] Castles were strongly garrisoned, and an army of royal officials was sent into the Principality to administer the ceded lands and keep a watchful eye on the Welsh in the native principalities. But Edward had yet to learn that a proud and warlike people would not tolerate the rule of aliens who gloried in the obliteration of national institutions and customs. In 1282 the flames of revolt, sedulously fanned by Llywelyn and Dafydd who were now reconciled, spread throughout Wales, and threatened the English possessions in the principality. Luck was with Edward: early in the revolt Llywelyn was slain in a skirmish near Builth, and Dafydd lacked the ability to inspire and lead a great national uprising. The English king invaded the country and penetrated into the heart of Snowdonia. Dafydd was hunted down and taken: tried by a parliament at Shrewsbury he was convicted of treason and executed.

The Edwardian settlement of Wales was contained in the *Statute of Rhuddlan* (1284). The old principality of Gwynedd was split up into the shires of Caernarvon, Merioneth, and Anglesey which were to be administered from Caernarvon by a justice of North Wales; Flint was attached to the palatine earldom of Chester; and the shires of Cardigan and Caermarthen comprised the district of West Wales, which was administered from Caermarthen. A ring of concentric castles was constructed in order to check possible outbreaks of national enthusiasm, and the four Welsh dioceses were brought under the control of Canterbury. Although in this settlement Edward introduced the English legal system, he was not without sympathy towards Welsh customs. It was the lesson which he had learnt in the first Welsh war, and it ensured the success of his policy. The story of his bestowal of a prince—Edward of Caernarvon—on the Welsh is an invention of Tudor times; this fourth son, who was destined to rule as Edward II. was not created Prince of Wales until 1301, and then in a parliament at Lincoln.

Edward was a man of large vision, and he undoubtedly dreamed of a kingdom which embraced England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. The death of Alexander III. of Scotland in 1288 brought that dream within the realm of realisation;

[1] In 1279 Edward exchanged with Edmund of Lancaster lands near Derby for lands in south Ceredigion and Dyfed, and these were joined with the ceded districts in the north of the former district to form the administrative unit of West Wales.

and two years later at Brigham he concluded a treaty with the Scottish magnates whereby Margaret, the "Maid of Norway," upon whom the Scottish throne had devolved on the death of her grandfather Alexander, was to marry Edward of Caernarvon. It is true that the Scots insisted that the union should be a personal one; but that was a difficulty which could be got over in time; and Edward was not the man to wreck a cherished scheme by impatience. But Margaret died on her way home from Norway, and the northern kingdom was immediately faced with a disputed succession. There were three claimants to the throne—John Baliol, Robert Bruce, and John Hastings; and invited to examine their claims Edward pronounced in favour of Baliol (Award of Norham, 1292). His decision was undoubtedly influenced by the fact that Baliol was known to be a man of weak will: Edward certainly had no difficulty in persuading him to do homage for his newly acquired kingdom. The Scots, however, were not prepared to accept the rule of a puppet king, and so strong was the opposition to Baliol that he was constrained to ally himself with France and renounce his homage to Edward.

The moment for this change of front was well chosen (1295): Edward, as will presently be seen, was involved in a quarrel with France. But he had no intention of allowing Baliol to have things his own way. "Ha! the false fool," said Edward when in response to his summons to renew his homage Baliol returned a flat refusal, "what folly is his! If he will not come to us, we will come to him." Actually Edward's position was unassailable: Baliol's renunciation of his homage had put him in the wrong, and by feudal custom the overlord was within his rights to proceed against the recalcitrant vassal. An invasion of the northern kingdom followed: Berwick was taken; the Scottish army was defeated near Dunbar; and Baliol surrendered the kingdom into Edward's hands (1296). From 1296 to 1306 Scotland was without a king: the government was conducted by officials appointed by Edward. There were sporadic revolts up and down the country; but the defeat of William Wallace at Falkirk in 1298 and the capture of Stirling in 1304 broke the back of the nationalist resistance; and as a result Edward was not greatly troubled by danger from the side of the northern kingdom until the closing months of his reign.

It was inevitable that there should be difficulties with France. Since the days of Philip Augustus it had been a definite rule of French policy to diminish the influence of the English kings in France; and Edward's successful pacification of his French possessions was by no means favourably regarded in court circles in Paris. Pacification was followed by claims to lands which had passed out of English hands, and the constant bickerings on these territorial readjustments created such an atmosphere of hostility that it would have been impossible to expect friendly relations to exist between the two countries for any length of time. Thus it was not difficult to pick a quarrel; and in 1293 Philip IV.

threw down the gauntlet when he summoned Edward as his vassal to appear in Paris to answer for the behaviour of English and Gascon sailors in the Channel and to explain the disturbances in Gascony. Edward sent his brother Edmund to Paris as his deputy: his refusal to come in person was a challenge which Philip IV. could not allow to pass unheeded, and the result was war. There was little that was spectacular in this renewal of an old rivalry. Both Edward and Philip found their hands tied by other interests; and they were not sorry when it was found possible to settle the quarrel by a compromise in 1303.

Edward's foreign policy was mainly the cause of the summoning of the Model Parliament in 1295. He was in desperate straits for money to maintain his country's honour against the Welsh,[1] Scots, and French, and was aware that the usual sources of revenue were dried up. On the principle, therefore, of "what touches all must be approved by all," he went to the nation for relief from his financial embarrassment. National assemblies were convened prior to 1295, but they were not parliaments in the modern sense of the word. To the Model Parliament the archbishops, bishops, and greater barons were individually summoned; the sheriffs were commanded to return two knights from their respective shires, two burgesses from every borough in the shires; and the archdeacons and priors were summoned through the archbishops, and the clergy were represented by elected proctors. Thus the *parliament* was representative of every interest in the nation, but its proceedings differed greatly from those adopted nowadays; and the tax which was to be levied was not discussed and voted upon by the whole assembly, but by each *estate* separately.

Actually Edward had created a dangerous precedent from his own point of view: he had conceded the right of the country to approve new forms of taxation. When he showed a reluctance to abandon the levying of tallages or arbitrary taxes the clergy and barons opposed him, and clamoured for a confirmation of the charters and a new charter of the forests; and taking advantage of his lack of funds and determination to continue the war against France they wrung from him these concessions in 1297. The *Confirmatio Cartarum* of that year was a reissue of *Magna Carta*; but in pressing for this concession the barons put forward demands which under the name of *De Tallagio non Concedendo* attempted to deprive the king of the right to take aids and tallages without the consent of the nation; and although it was long held that Edward even capitulated on these baronial petitions it is now believed that they were never confirmed.

The *Confirmatio Cartarum* was a constitutional victory of the first importance; but it was not the achievement of disinterested politicians; and behind

[1] A rebellion broke out in Wales in 1294: it was led by Madog ap Llywelyn, who claimed to belong to one of the princely houses of the principality.

it lies the resentment of the clergy and barons due to Edward's attack on clerical and baronial privileges. From the commencement of his reign Edward demonstrated that it was his intention to make law go hand in hand with order; and his work as a legislator has justly bestowed upon him the proud title of "the English Justinian." He was a great legislator; and he aimed to give greater definition to the law which operated within his kingdom. In the royal service were at least three brilliant lawyers: Francesco Accursi, an Italian professor of Roman Law and the son of a famous jurist; Robert Burnell, who was chancellor until his death in 1292 and was preferred to the see of Bath and Wells notwithstanding that he was the father of a large family; and Ralph of Hengham, who was raised to the judicial bench by Henry III. and was promoted by Edward to be chief justice of the King's Bench. These three men, working under Edward's direction, gave England that respect for Common Law which she has never lost.

They cunningly used law as a means of curbing the two disruptive forces in mediæval life—the Church and the Baronage. John's submission and Henry III.'s subservience to the papacy gave the clergy a privileged position from which it was possible not only to challenge the sovereignty of the monarch, but also to pursue a policy inimical to national interests. Edward recognised that it was imperative again to define the relationship of Church and State; and as might be expected his definition took the form of a limitation of the ecclesiastical power. Thus in 1279 was enacted the *Statute of Mortmain* or *De Religiosis*, which forbade the granting of lands to any corporation, lay or ecclesiastical, in such a way that the grant should come *in manu mortua* or "in the dead hand;" and this measure prevented the alienation to the church or gilds of lands in respect of which the crown was entitled to claim feudal dues. Six years later a more important check was imposed upon the church by the writ *Circumspecte Agatis* (1285): for the future ecclesiastical courts were to concern themselves only with ecclesiastical causes.

In 1278 by the *Statute of Gloucester* itinerant justices were empowered to inquire by what warrant—the writ used was known as *Quo Warranto*—the baronial franchises were held. As it happened vested interests were too strong for Edward, and he wisely refrained from pushing to its logical conclusion a policy which drew a howl of rage from the baronage;[1] but his efforts were not altogether fruitless, since they prevented the creation of new jurisdictions. Similarly by the *Statute of Westminster II.* (1285) and the *Statute of Westminster III.* (1290) the hold of the crown over baronial lands was considerably tightened. By the clause *De Donis Conditionalibus* in the former Edward created the system of entail; and while this appeared as a sop to the baronage, it was a great benefit to the crown as the largest landholder in the kingdom.

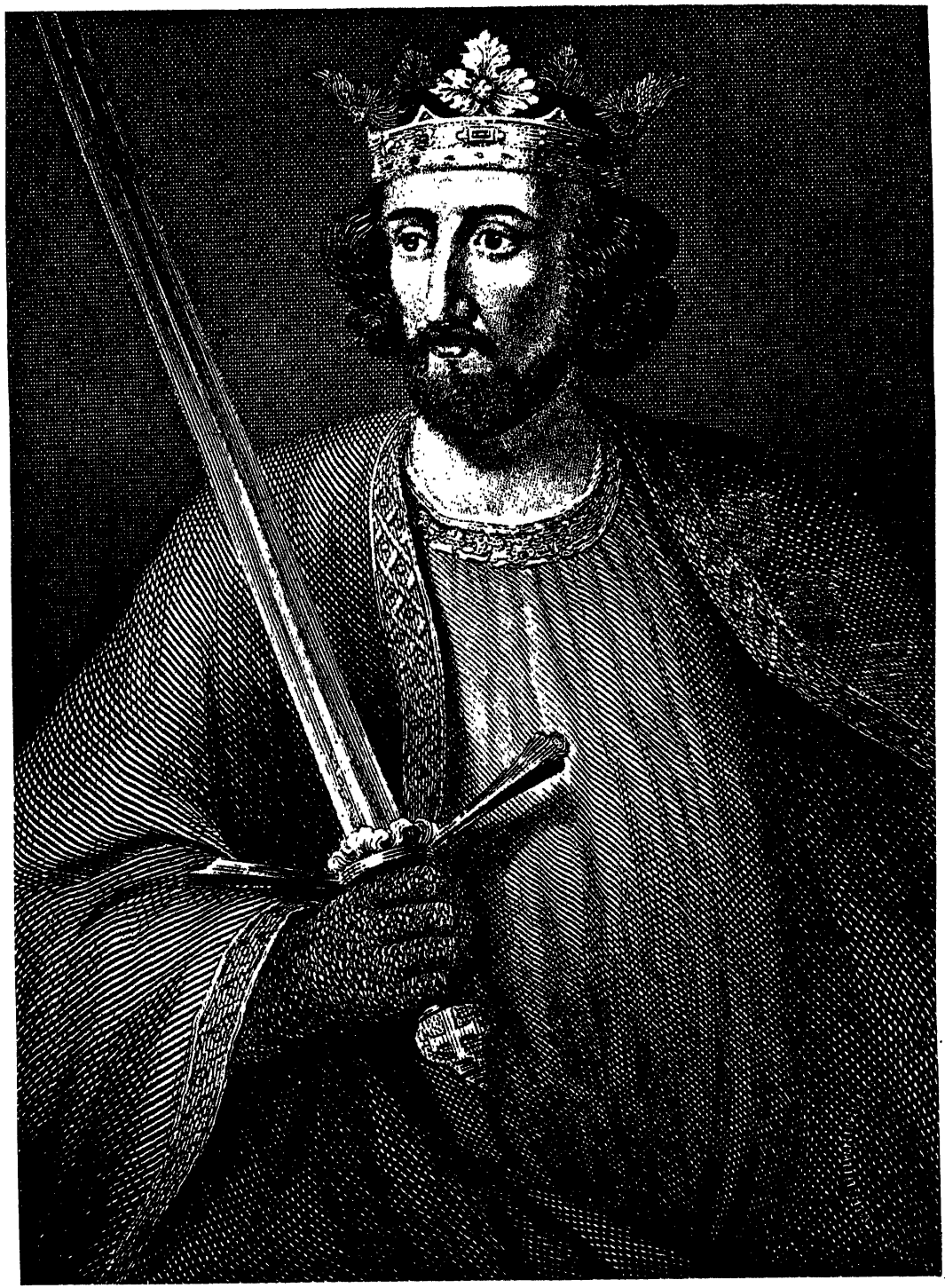
[1] When William of Warenne was asked to produce his titles he bluntly informed the justices: "I hold by my ancestor's sword, and by that sword I will keep what I hold."

The *Statute of Winchester III.*, sometimes known as *Quia Emptores*, regulated land sales: previously it was the rule that the purchaser became the vassal of the vendor; but for the future the purchaser would be the vassal of the vendor's lord, and once again the crown benefited.

Of a more general character, but still with the object of strengthening the royal power by means of more precise definition, were the provisions of the *Statute of Westminster I.* (1275), enacted in the first parliament of the reign. The renewal of the clauses of *Magna Carta* and the measure to secure greater safety on the roads were gestures which were widely appreciated; but the revival of the *Assize of Arms* of 1181 put at the disposal of the crown a reasonably armed local militia which could be used when necessary against the baronage. The innovation of granting the king the *Magna et Antiqua Custuma* furnished the trading classes with an excuse for participating in government. Edward saw that a prosperous business community lends stability to a state, and he was therefore not averse from legislation which benefited the merchants. The *Statute of Acton Burnell* (1283) was a boon to commerce in that it made credit in business possible by establishing a system of rational debt collection; and the import and export trade of the kingdom was immeasurably benefited by the *Carta Mercatoria* (1303) which fixed import and export dues.

A further buttress to the power of the crown was obtained by a reform of the judicial system. In the *Statute of Westminster II.* it was laid down that two justices should be available for trying cases at Westminster three times a year, *unless* they had been heard *previously* in the county courts by the itinerant justices. This rule of *Nisi Prius* was designed to speed-up justice. In 1293 Edward divided the kingdom into four circuits, and assigned two justices to each; and not only were assizes more regularly held but the itinerant justices now dealt with civil as well as criminal causes. The central courts were reorganised. The Court of the Exchequer took cognisance of financial cases, the Court of Common Pleas of disputes between subject and subject, and the Court of the King's Bench of cases involving the pleas of the crown. It was in Edward's reign that the chancellor began the practice of hearing petitions against the verdicts passed in the lower courts; and his decisions, based on equity or common sense rather than legal precepts, were in the course of time accepted as precedents as binding as enacted law. In this way the harshness of the Common Law was mitigated in the litigants' interest.

The clerical and baronial counter-attacks against these reforms involved Edward in serious clashes with the church and greater barons. In 1297, for example, Archbishop Winchelsey put into operation Boniface VIII.'s bull *Clericis Laicos*, which ordered the clergy not to give money to a temporal prince without papal consent. If the church would not lend the state financial



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EDWARD I.

aid, said Edward, then the state must withdraw her protection of the church; and he carried the war into the enemy's camp when he outlawed the clergy and confiscated ecclesiastical property. The clergy, with the exception of Winchelsey and the Bishop of Lincoln (Oliver Sutton), yielded without much of a struggle; and since circumstances made it impossible for Edward to continue the quarrel with the archbishop a compromise was found, and they were reconciled. Boniface's withdrawal of the bull was an admission that the church could not withstand the opposition of the secular power in England and France.

Nothing more forcibly demonstrated Edward's determination not to tolerate baronial lawlessness than his punishment of Gilbert Earl of Gloucester and Humphrey Earl of Hereford in 1291; but this successful interference in a marcher quarrel was most bitterly resented; and in 1296 provoked a dangerous defiance of his authority. In that year he had ordered his barons to proceed to Gascony: he himself proposed to go to Flanders; and it was his hope that by means of an attack delivered from these two bases he would be able to bring the French king to his knees. But Roger Earl of Norfolk, the Marshal, and Humphrey Earl of Hereford, the Constable, reminded the king that by feudal custom they were not bound to serve in any expedition which was not commanded by the monarch in person. "I will willingly go with you, O King," said Norfolk, "riding before you in the front rank, as is my hereditary right." "You will even go without me like the rest," snapped back Edward. "I am not bound, nor is it my wish, O King, to take the road without you," insolently replied the earl. "By God, Earl," said the king in a towering rage, "you will either go or hang!" "By the same oath, O King," flung back Norfolk, "I will neither go nor hang." Edward was beaten, and he drained the dregs of his humiliation when in the following year he was compelled, as we have seen, to confirm the charters.

Edward kept Lent of 1306 at Winchester: there he heard the news that Robert Bruce's followers had murdered John Comyn *the Red* at Dumfries, and that their leader had raised the banner of revolt against the English rule. The Earl of Pembroke was immediately sent with a force into the northern kingdom, and a proclamation was issued to the effect that all who were bound to receive knighthood should repair to Westminster without delay. The reports from Scotland were alarming, and while the Whitsun celebration were at their height Edward swore that he would punish Bruce, and then would bear arms no more, but would retire to die in the Holy Land. The young Edward, with a magnificent army was sent forward to reinforce Pembroke: the king, now too infirm to sit a horse, followed slowly by litter. Dysentery laid him low in September 1306, and ill-health was undoubtedly responsible for the severity of the punishments meted out to those Scots who fell into English hands. For

the greater part of the winter Edward remained with his queen at Lanercost;[1] he was frequently incapacitated by illness, and the behaviour of his son caused him worry and unhappiness. But his spirit was not broken, and when he learnt that Bruce was again at large he resolved to lead an army in person into Scotland. On 3rd July 1307, mounted on his horse, he began his march into Scotland; but his strength failed him, and he only rode two miles that day. The same distance was covered on the 4th, and on the following day he was too weak even to sit his horse. On the 6th, Edward reached Burgh-on-Sands. For him it was the end of the road: calling the young Edward to his side he bade him farewell, and charged the young prince to send his heart for burial in the Holy Land, not to bury his body until Scotland was completely subdued, to see that his bones were carried at the head of the English army operating against Bruce and his friends, and never to recall from exile Piers Gaveston. On the following day, Edward I. breathed his last: England had lost the greatest of her mediæval kings.

IT WAS CHARACTERISTIC of Edward II. that he should pay scant heed to his father's dying wishes. After a brief spell of service in Scotland he handed over the tedious task of pacifying the country to Pembroke, and hastened south to meet Piers Gaveston whose companionship meant more to him than anything else in the world. His father's body was carried gravely to Westminster; the bones never went to Scotland. The dead king had suffered much sorrow on account of the low-born Gascon's influence over his son: in February 1307 he had banished him, and the great nobles had applauded the act. But now Gaveston was back, as insolent as ever and determined to make the most of his privileged position as the king's friend and confidant.

Physically Edward *of Caernarvon* was very like his father: he was handsome and strongly made, but he loathed knightly pursuits; and in war he had the heart of a coward. The old king had taken great pains to make his son worthy of the exalted position he one day must occupy. But his efforts were all to no purpose. Edward had neither the capacity nor the liking for hard work in the council chamber; and as long as he could gratify his whims he was indifferent to the claims of kingly office. Shunning the company of men in his own class, Edward consorted with grooms and watermen; and nothing gave him greater pleasure than a day's thatching or a morning's work in a smithy. On state occasions he strutted magnificently in fine clothes, yet he always lacked dignity. He was incapable of keeping a secret: in the hands of men whose wills were stronger than his own he was a puppet. But he had a keen appreciation of music and enjoyed theatrical entertain-

[1] Edward's queen, Eleanor of Castile, died in 1290; nine years later he married Margaret, daughter of Philip III. of France.

ments, and in the royal stables and kennels were kept good breeds of horses and dogs.

It was to be expected that the new king would dispense with the services of the ministers who had served his father so efficiently: they were replaced by favourites, prominent among whom was Walter Reynolds, whose influence over the king was almost as baneful as Gaveston's. Much to the disgust of the nobles the Gascon was created Earl of Cornwall: he was also appointed regent when early in 1308 Edward journeyed to France to do homage for Gascony to Philip IV. *le Bel* and to marry his suzerain's young daughter Isabella. Edward brought his queen back to England early in February, and on the 25th they were crowned at Westminster. Gaveston's arrogant behaviour at the coronation feast occasioned the first of the baronial outbursts against his influence: so disgusted were the queen's uncles at the way Edward neglected his wife that they left the country as a protest.

Such a state of affairs could not last long: at the Easter meeting of the council the barons demanded Gaveston's banishment. Edward pleaded for his friends, but the barons were adamant, and the king gave way. "Brother Piers" was sent away to govern Ireland: he was accompanied by Edward himself on the journey to Bristol, where a ship was waiting to carry him across the Irish Sea. This baronial victory was followed up by a demand that Edward should dismiss his worthless ministers; and again the king bowed before the storm. But he was, nevertheless, determined to recall his friend; and by cunningly dividing the baronial party against itself he achieved his end (July 1309). Gaveston and his former enemies were reconciled in a parliament at Stamford: Edward, to mark the happy event, graciously agreed to redress grievances about which the barons had previously petitioned.

But Gaveston was an irrepressible braggart, and the insults which he heaped upon some of the great barons of the realm made them bitter enemies of both king and favourite. The young Gilbert Earl of Gloucester he dubbed "horessone;" Henry Earl of Lincoln, "broste bely;" Thomas Earl of Lancaster, "cherl;" and Guy Earl of Warwick, "the blac hounde of Arderne." And none enjoyed Gaveston's sallies more than Edward himself. The leader of the baronial opposition was Lancaster: he was Edward's cousin, being the son of his father's brother Edmund; and territorially he was the most powerful subject in the kingdom.[1] Lancaster was no disinterested politician; he was ambitious and factious; and although the people of England revered him for his opposition to Edward, he gave little thought to their interests and played only for his own hand.

In March 1310 Edward was again compelled to yield to the opposition when

[1] Earl Thomas held the Earldom of Lancaster, Derby, and Leicester, and stood next in succession to the Earldoms of Lincoln and Salisbury.

he sanctioned the appointment of a commission "to make such ordinances as shall be to the honour and advantage of Holy Church, to the honour of the King and to his advantage, and that of his people according to the oath which the King took at his coronation." This body, which consisted of Archbishop Winchelsey, six bishops and eight earls, went by the name of Lords Ordainers. In the following year they presented their reforms in thirty-five articles, and among the suggestions put forward was the perpetual banishment of Gaveston who was popularly regarded as the cause of king's misgovernment. Once again Edward fought to retain the company of his "brother Piers;" he promised to accept all the "ordinances" if his friend were left untouched. The Lords Ordainers would not hear of Gaveston being allowed to remain in the country, and the king finally agreed to his banishment.

Gaveston had fled to France as soon as he learnt that the Lords Ordainers meant to drive him from the court; but owing to his treatment of Edward's queen he was as unpopular in that country as he was at home, and he was therefore driven to find sanctuary in Flanders. By the end of November, however, he was back in England; and the news that he was harboured at Windsor was the signal for the Lords Ordainers to resort to arms. In the face of this armed opposition Edward and Gaveston fled north: the baronial army moved ponderously after them, and harried them out of one refuge after another. Finally Gaveston shut himself up in the castle at Scarborough; but a three-weeks' siege forced him to surrender, and it was agreed that his life should be spared, though he was to stand his trial for returning to the country after the publication of the decree of banishment (May 1312).

Pembroke escorted Gaveston back to London; but near Banbury, while Pembroke was absent on a visit to his wife, Warwick seized the favourite and carried him off to his castle at Warwick; and on 19th June in the presence of Lancaster, Arundel, and Warwick the wretched man was summarily executed on Blacklow Hill. This dastardly piece of treachery and bad faith resulted in Pembroke's desertion of the baronial cause; and Edward's resolve to make his friend's murderers answer for their actions brought the country to the verge of civil war. The birth of the future Edward III. in November relieved the tension somewhat, and in little over a month the basis of a settlement was reached. But it was not until September 1313 that Edward and the Lords Ordainers were formally reconciled, and even then it was apparent that there was resentment on both sides.

Actually the real reason for this reconciliation was not a desire to forget the past, but the threatened danger from the side of Scotland. In the northern kingdom Bruce had taken advantage of the internal dissensions in England and the ineffectiveness of the English king's government; and slowly he had managed to wrest out of the conqueror's hands some of the important fortresses

held since the days of Edward I. The news that the garrison of Stirling Castle had agreed to capitulate if not relieved by Midsummer Day 1314 stirred Edward's government to action. A great army was mustered, and sent across the border. On 24th June was fought and lost the battle of Bannockburn: it was a disgrace which Edward was never to live down. Yet the blame was not his alone. Lancaster and his friends had refused to march with the king against the Scots; and on the eve of the battle Gloucester and Hereford wasted valuable time in wrangling over a matter of feudal precedence. An assertive baronage insisted that the old feudal tactics should be preferred to those which Edward I. had employed in his battles.

The defeat at Bannockburn virtually placed the control of the government in the hands of Lancaster. He was loud in his condemnation of the royal failure to vindicate the country's honour; and supported by the baronage of the northern shires succeeded in ousting Pembroke from the command of the army and in assuming the leading place in the council. The people looked to him as the one man who could stop the misgovernment of the king: the clergy supported him because he was the champion of orthodoxy. But Lancaster's policy was as ineffective as his cousin's: he failed to redeem the disaster of Bannockburn, to relieve the distress of the people at home, and to initiate much-needed reforms; and when it was told that the Scots raiding the northern shires spared the Lancastrian lands, people whispered that their owner was in league with Bruce.[1]

The formation of a new baronial party in which the leading spirits were Pembroke, Surrey, and Badlesmere was meant as a definite challenge to Lancaster's position as the chief subject of the king. A clash between these two parties took place in 1317 when Surrey planned the elopement of Lancaster's countess. The earl believed that Edward had known of the affair, and bluntly announced that he would not attend meetings of the council as long as Surrey and his friends were received at court. Again the country was disturbed by the threat of civil war; but neither side wished to open hostilities; and at Leek in August 1318 another reconciliation between Edward and his factious cousin took place.

It was a defect in Edward's character that he never knew how to take advantage of his victories. The terms of the settlement at Leek deprived Lancaster of his pre-eminent position in the government; and in his heart the king secretly hid the resolve to make the earl pay the penalty for the murder of Gaveston. He knew that Pembroke would never support such a scheme: with all his defects Pembroke at least strove to serve Edward faithfully and to win respect for his government. Thus the king was driven into the arms of

[1] The rumour was that Lancaster allowed Bruce's followers to raid the northern shires to embarrass the king.

the Despensers, father and son, whose friendship was dictated solely by a determination to enrich themselves at the nation's expense.

The younger Despenser's rapacity involved Edward in another quarrel with his more powerful baronial subjects. He was married to Eleanor, one of the de Clare heiresses, and in her right was Lord of Glamorgan; but he wished to bring under his control the other de Clare estates which were partitioned between his sisters-in-law, respectively the wives of Roger d'Amory and Hugh Audley; and when he had partially achieved his end he cast covetous eyes on the de Braose lordship of Gower in west Glamorgan. William de Braose, Lord of Gower, was eager to sell his estates to John Lord Mowbray and the Earl of Hereford; but Despenser persuaded Edward to refuse his consent to the transaction; and when de Braose died in 1320 and Mowbray took possession of Gower as the legal heir according to "the Custom of the March" the favourite faced the new owner with the ultimatum that the law of the land overrode "the Custom of the March" and stated that without the royal assent he had no title to the Gower lands. This attack upon the vested interests of the marchers was met by force. The Welsh lands of the two Despensers were quickly overrun by the marchers' forces; and the estates which had been filched were restored to their former owners.

Edward's sympathies were entirely with the Despensers, and the marchers knew it: therefore when he commanded both sides to cease fighting and ordered Hereford and Roger Mortimer, Lord of Wigmore, the two leaders of the marcher resistance, to appear before him the summons was refused; and supported by Lancaster's party in England the marchers demanded the banishment of the Despensers. Edward made a feeble show of resistance, but the forces arrayed against him were too strong to be withstood; and in the end Pembroke persuaded him to agree to the marcher demands. So the Despensers were sent into exile: it was another triumph for baronial factiousness against the royal authority (August 1321).

Edward did not have to wait long for an opportunity of having his revenge. In October Badlesmere's wife refused to give the queen accommodation for the night in her husband's castle of Leeds in Kent.[1] Edward, furiously angry at this affront, quickly collected a strong force; took the castle after a short siege; executed some of the garrison; and clapped Lady Badlesmere and her daughters in the Tower. The rapidity of the king's movements for the moment completely paralysed the opposition; and flushed with success Edward recalled the Despensers, and made ready to proceed against Badlesmere and his marcher friends. Flinging his troops into the marches he overthrew the Mortimers at

[1] Lady Badlesmere's action may be explained by her fear to admit royal forces into her husband's castle at a time when he was engaged in plundering the Despenser estates. Badlesmere himself immediately apologised for his wife's refusal to admit the queen, but the apology was ignored.

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EDWARD II.

Bridgnorth, and when the other leaders of the baronial party went helter-skelter for assistance to Lancaster in the north of England, Edward marched boldly after them. On 16th March he reached the great Lancastrian stronghold of Pontefract: on the same day the baronial army had been hopelessly beaten at Boroughbridge by the Westmorland and Cumberland levies under the command of Harcla, sheriff of the latter county. Hereford was slain during the fighting: Lancaster and Mowbray were taken prisoners. The hour of Edward's revenge had struck. Lancaster was brought before a court which had adjudged him guilty without hearing his defence: he was quickly found guilty of treason, and condemned to death was beheaded at Pontefract. And a score of his friends shared his fate.

In fairness to the Despensers, whose influence was paramount after Boroughbridge, it must be said that they began by making some show of better government; but their failure to check the Scottish ravages in the northern shires brought down upon their heads the criticism of not vindicating the country's honour; and the conclusion of a truce with Bruce in May 1323 was popularly regarded as a miserable surrender. But whatever administrative capacity the Despensers possessed was liquidated by their greed and rapacity. The younger one was soon at loggerheads with the queen, and her resentment was increased by the fact that Edward openly preferred the company of these favourites to her's.

In 1322 Philip V. became King of France, and it was Edward's duty to do homage to him for Gascony. Probably because they were afraid of allowing him to escape from their influence the Despensers persuaded Edward to postpone his visit to France: the result was that the French believed that the English king sought deliberately to avoid doing homage, and when repeated requests for the performance of this feudal obligation were met by a variety of diplomatic manœuvres, the French lost patience and attacked Gascony. To settle this dispute Edward sent his queen, who was Philip's sister, to Paris in March 1325. She did all that was required of her, and later in the year their eldest son was invested with Gascony and sent to France to do homage to his uncle.

Then the blow fell. Isabella announced that she would stay in Paris until the younger Despenser was banished from England; and although Edward threatened and pleaded with her she refused to alter her decision. The truth was that the queen was enamoured of Roger Mortimer, one of the leaders of the marcher revolt of 1322, who had escaped from the Tower and gone to Paris for sanctuary. Together they plotted to overthrow the Despensers, and probably even to dethrone Edward; and on 24th September 1326 with a competent force they landed in Suffolk to put their plan into operation. London at once joined the insurgents, and the king and his friends fled into the west country. At the end of October the elder Despenser was taken and executed at Bristol:

less than a month later Edward and the younger Despenser were captured in Glamorgan; and the latter was promptly executed at Hereford.

It was at Monmouth on 20th November that Edward himself surrendered into the hands of the unscrupulous Adam of Orlton, Bishop of Hereford, the great seal of the kingdom. He was thereupon taken to Kenilworth where he remained a prisoner throughout the winter in the custody of Lancaster, the son of Earl Thomas, who had died at Pontefract. He was well treated: indeed, his enemies upbraided Lancaster for his generosity towards the prisoner. The parliament which met in January 1327 declared Edward II. deposed and elected his son king; but the young prince would not accept the throne unless his father requested him to do so; and a parliamentary deputation thereupon went to Kenilworth formally to receive the prisoner's abdication (20th January). The scene was a painful one: Edward fainted when the deputation was brought into his presence; he listened pathetically to the parliamentary message spoken by Orlton; and then with tears and lamentations he surrendered his kingly office and committed the young Edward to the nation's care.

Where they took the unfortunate prisoner from Kenilworth it is now difficult to know, but Isabella and Mortimer were resolved that he must die, and relieving Lancaster of the responsibility of guarding him, they placed the late king in charge of Thomas de Gournay and John Maltravers, two unscrupulous knights who could be relied upon to make his life a hell on earth. And so they did: they mocked him, starved him, and subjected him to indescribable indignities; and when they could neither break his spirit nor undermine his magnificent constitution, they foully murdered him in Berkeley Castle (21st September). On 20th December 1327 Edward's body was buried in the Benedictine abbey church of St Peter in Gloucester, and the magnificent tomb which was subsequently raised over his grave soon became the favourite venue of pilgrims.

EDWARD III. WAS in his fifteenth year when he ascended the throne; and in view of his youth, therefore, parliament appointed a council to assist him in the work of government. Lancaster was the young king's guardian, but the real power reposed in the queen and her lover Mortimer, and they used it in their own interests. They made peace with France in March 1327, and opened negotiations with the Scots. In consequence of the disturbed state of the Anglo-Scottish border the English government sent an expeditionary force into Scotland under the nominal command of the boy-king. There was much marching and counter-marching, but no general engagement, and to Edward's disappointment the army was led back to York without having achieved anything.

It was in the great minster at York that Edward was married to Philippa of Hainault (24th January 1328). Two months later he was confronted with

the terms of the peace settlement with Scotland, negotiated by Mortimer and his mother. It was a "shameful peace:" the claims over Scotland were surrendered; the king's sister Joan was to be married to David, the son of Robert Bruce, there was to be a perpetual alliance between the two kingdoms. These terms were confirmed by a parliament which met at Northampton in April; and they were greeted by the people of the kingdom with a howl of rage against Mortimer and the queen. Lancaster was the one man whom both feared: he was disinterested and uncorruptible; and he was determined to do his best for the young king. But Mortimer and Isabella denied him access to his sovereign, and that rendered him impotent. Nevertheless Lancaster was not the man to submit to such treatment without a struggle, and supported by the king's half-uncles, Earl Edmund of Kent and Thomas, Earl of Norfolk, he openly opposed Mortimer. Archbishop Mepham of Canterbury intervened, and a reconciliation was effected before the quarrel had involved the country in another civil war.

Mortimer was a cunning man and Isabella an unscrupulous woman, and together they planned to disrupt the opposition arrayed against them. They ensnared Kent into treason, and put him to death with the king's knowledge (March 1330). But they had reckoned without Edward: made conscious of his manhood by the birth of the future Black Prince in June 1330, and tired of the tutelage imposed upon him by Mortimer and Isabella, he resolved to assert himself, and he seized them as they slept together in Nottingham Castle (November). Mortimer was summarily tried and executed: the queen was placed under restraint in Castle Rising in Norfolk. Edward was no longer a puppet king.

Robert Bruce had died in the previous year: his heir was the boy David II., in whose name a regency governed the northern kingdom. It was unthinkable that England should accept as final the peace terms agreed upon at Northampton, but Edward himself was a stickler for legality, and he was determined not to provoke a war against the Scots until he was convinced that he had right on his side. Fortune favoured him when, contrary to the conditions laid down in the peace treaty, the regency government refused to restore the Scottish estates of those barons who had supported the English cause. Although he would not openly assist the "Disinherited," as they were called, he nevertheless was aware of their plan to invade Scotland, and secretly encouraged them. The invaders were everywhere successful; they defeated the Regent Mar at Dupplin Muir, captured Perth, and elected Edward Baliol king (1332). Here was Edward's opportunity to abrogate the treaty: he claimed that the change of dynasty in Scotland created an entirely new situation, and Edward Baliol promptly recognised the English king as his overlord. But the Scots had no liking for English domination; they rose against Baliol, and sent him flying for

assistance to Edward. The English king, therefore, marched an army into Scotland to restore his vassal, and at the battle of Halidon Hill he overwhelmed the nationalist forces, secured control of Berwick, and replaced Baliol on the Scottish throne. Naturally this assistance was followed by concessions: by the Treaty of Newcastle Baliol agreed to cede to England the greater part of the Lowlands (1334).

In view of Edward's coming struggle with France this intervention in Scottish affairs was a great mistake. The detestation in which the Baliols were held by the Scots made it imperative for Edward to retain a strong armed force in Scotland to maintain Edward Baliol's position as king. When the French war broke out that force had to be withdrawn, and the result was the collapse of Edward Baliol's government, and the return of David II., who since 1332 had been an honoured refugee in Paris. Self-preservation drove David into the arms of the French; he returned to his kingdom a confirmed Francophile, and gave expression to his convictions by doing all that he could to embarrass his southern neighbour.

It was in this reign that the famous Hundred Years War began. It must not be supposed that England and France were continuously at war for a century: actually the war consisted of raids and counter-raids; there were surprisingly few organised campaigns; and truces and treaties gave long periods of outward amity. But for a hundred years Englishmen never abandoned the idea of regaining the French lands which had once formed part of Henry II.'s possessions; and even when all hope of making that idea a fact was lost, England's kings loved to style themselves "Kings of France."

The immediate cause of the war was Edward's exasperation at the French inroads into his Gascon possessions. It was a settled principle of French policy to diminish the English influence in south-west France, and although protestations of peace and friendship were made, encouragement was regularly given in Paris to any movement against the English authority in Gascony. On the other hand, English policy could never escape from the memory of the Angevin empire, which had challenged the authority of the French monarchy, and to a man of Edward's warlike inclinations the temptation of regaining the lost provinces of that empire was too alluring to be resisted. The peace which Mortimer and Isabella had concluded in 1327 was soon jeopardised by Edward's behaviour, when in 1329 he went to Amiens to do homage to Philip VI. for his French possessions. He appeared before his suzerain wearing his crown and fully armed, whereas it was the custom for homage to be done bareheaded and without a sword or spurs.[1] Philip's protests were met by a demand for an appeal to precedents: at the same

[1] There were two kinds of homage—*general homage* and *liege homage*. The homage which Edward did at Amiens was *general homage*; but the French rightly maintained that he owed *liege homage* for Gascony.

time the French king promised to surrender those lands which had been taken from the English crown during the reigns of Henry III. and Edward II. Precedents were not in Edward's favour, and in March 1331 he acknowledged that he owed the French king liege homage for Gascony, and in the following month he went to France to perform his feudal obligations in the accustomed form.

But dangling before Edward's eyes was the prospect of uniting the crowns of England and France in his own person. Philip IV. of France had died in 1314 leaving three sons and one daughter; and these sons in turn ascended the French throne—Louis X. in 1314, Philip V. in 1316, and Charles IV. in 1322. Each had daughters; but their claims were passed over according to the rule of Salic Law that the realm of France could not pass to a female. The death of Charles IV. in 1328, however, raised a vital question—upon whom would the crown devolve? There were two claimants, Philip of Valois, the son of Philip IV.'s brother Charles of Valois, and Edward III. of England, the son of Isabella, Philip IV.'s only daughter. The whole question turned on whether or not a female could transmit her claims to a male. Feudal law was inclined to admit that this could be done, and this made Edward's claim better than that of Philip of Valois. But the French people had no intention of accepting the rule of a foreigner; and Philip of Valois was thereupon chosen as Charles IV.'s successor.

The homage which Edward did for his Gascon lands implied that he recognised Philip VI. as the lawful king of France. But the French king's acts were hardly consistent with his protestations of friendship; he harboured David II. of Scotland at his court, and showed a reluctance to hand over the lands rightly belonging to Edward. The bad feeling was intensified by vital commercial considerations. When the Flemish wool workers rose in revolt against their count, Louis de Nevers, he appealed for and obtained assistance from France, and his punishment of the rebels took the form of depriving them of their livelihood by restricting their supplies of raw wool. These supplies came from England, and not only were the wool growers made to suffer, but the king himself experienced a loss of income, for he was entitled to the dues levied on exported wool. Thus Edward found his interests identical with those of the Flemings; and when in 1337 the nationalist party in Flanders under the leadership of Jacques van Artevelde again expelled their count he was easily induced to lend the Flemings his support. It was probably from Jacques van Artevelde that the suggestion came that he should revive his claim to the French throne. With Edward as king of France their continued resistance to Louis de Nevers would lose its stigma of a rebellion against lawful authority: at the same time the commercial interests of England and Flanders would be ideally served. It was while in Flanders that Edward gave orders for the making of a new seal on which his title to the French throne was definitely stated (21st February 1340).

The activities of English and French pirates in the English Channel gave rise

to constant friction between the two countries. It would be difficult to say whether the English or the French were the greater sinners in this respect, but the English carrying-trade was more extensive than the French, and consequently the English merchants were more vocal in their condemnation of the piracy conducted by Norman and French sailors. Edward's condemnation of Philip's harbouring of David of Scotland rang hollow in France when it was known that a renegade French nobleman, Robert of Artois, was hospitably entertained at the English court. This man was suspected of murdering his aunt, and had fled the country when the French king attempted to bring him to justice. A contemporary poem, *The Vows of the Heron*, states that Robert persuaded Edward and his barons to avenge his wrongs. This is undoubtedly an exaggeration of Robert's influence in precipitating the war; but we can be certain that he was never on the side of the peace party which sought to avoid hostilities.

It would be tedious to trace in detail the course of the Hundred Years War in Edward's reign: indeed space does not admit of it. In 1338 Edward had succeeded in uniting the Emperor Louis, the Duke of Brabant, the Counts of Hainault and Guelders, and the Flemish burghers against the French, but he was quickly to discover that there was little military support to be had from the Germans and the Flemings; and an unsuccessful invasion of France in 1339 broke up the alliance. The great naval victory off Sluys was for Edward a striking personal achievement; it gave him command of the Narrow Seas, and enhanced his reputation. But his operations on land in 1340–42 were singularly ineffective, and the first real trial of strength was delayed until 1346. In August of that year at Crécy the French were hopelessly defeated in a battle which demonstrated to Europe the magnificent fighting qualities of the English archers, a handful of whom had dispersed and crushed a powerful feudal army. An attempt by the Scots to assist their French friends by an invasion of England while the king was absent in France was foiled by the energetic action of the queen, who sent the levies of the northern shires to give the invaders battle. At Nevil's Cross the Scots were routed, and their king was left a prisoner in English hands. The capture of Calais by Edward himself and Lancaster's successes in Gascony and Poitou were the solid achievements of 1347.

The next outstanding incident of the war was the Black Prince's victory at Poitiers in 1356. With only about 7000 men at his disposal he defeated the French army, estimated at 40,000 men; and once again it was the deadly shooting of the English archers which won the day. But both sides were too exhausted to continue the struggle, and although raids were planned and executed by the English government the effect of them was insignificant. The peace which was concluded in 1360 at Brétigni was the outcome rather of social disturbances within the realm of France than of English military achievements. Anarchy in Paris, the bloody Jacquérie, the widespread discontent in the

country, compelled the French government to accept the terms which Edward dictated. To Englishmen the Treaty of Brétigni was " the great peace." By it Edward renounced his claims to the French crown and to the Angevin possessions to the north of the Loire ; but in return he received in full sovereignty Aquitaine (which included Gascony and Poitou), and Calais, Ponthieu, and Guisnes in northern France ; and in addition the French undertook to pay him as ransom 3,000,000 golden crowns for their King John, who had been taken at Poitiers and was a prisoner in London.

It would be wrong to imagine that the war was popular in England. It was true that nearly every house could show some article of loot brought home from France, and that the soldiers who had fought with Edward were greatly admired by relatives and neighbours ; but the burden of taxation which was laid across the people's shoulders detracted from the glories of Edward's warlike operations against the traditional enemy ; and famine and plague had ravaged the country while the king and his men had fought in France. In 1348 had first appeared the filthy bubonic plague known as the Black Death ; and it carried off at least one-third of the population. The decrease in the number of labourers available for work on the land meant a sharp rise in wages ; and the landlords naturally sought to protect their own interests by laws regulating wages. Legislation, however, failed in its object and merely irritated the workers who were now made conscious of their worth ; and one of the results of the Black Death was to hasten the collapse of the old manorial system.

Edward lived long enough to see the dissipation of his conquests in France. At best the Treaty of Brétigni was no more than a truce : it was against reason that the French should accept as permanent an arrangement which made an alien power master of lands essentially French in tradition and character ; and it was therefore the policy of the government in Paris to be ready to take advantage of any English move which could be used as a legitimate excuse for reversing the Brétigni settlement. The longed-for opportunity came in 1369 when the Aquitanians rose in revolt against the Black Prince as a protest against the *focagium*, or hearth tax, levied to pay for his warlike schemes in Spain. The revolted Aquitanians appealed for assistance to the French king ; but he was not to be dragged into a purely domestic quarrel. At the same time, however, he persuaded them to bring specific charges of misgovernment against the Black Prince ; and when this was done he cited him to appear to answer them in his court at Paris. The refusal to obey the summons was the signal for war to commence.

The French soon had the advantage. In all the provinces ceded to Edward at Brétigni there were strong pro-French parties, and these were cunningly encouraged by the French king to embarrass their English rulers. By avoiding pitched battles the French commanders, inspired chiefly by Bertrand du

Guesclin, effectively demoralised the forces sent out from England to assert the English supremacy. The effect of this policy of masterly inactivity was seen in 1373. Edward's son John of Gaunt led a magnificent army through the heart of France, but the French refused to do battle; and when the Englishmen arrived at Bordeaux their one thought was to get out of the country, so great were their privations on the march. When John of Gaunt returned to England at the end of the following year all that remained in English hands in France was Calais in the north and Bordeaux and Bayonne in the south. In 1375 the Truce of Bruges put an end to the fighting in Edward's reign.

The war, however, had important constitutional reactions. Edward's constant need of funds compelled him to come to terms with the nation's representatives in parliament. Thus during his reign were established three vital principles of parliamentary government: first, the rule that all taxation without the consent of parliament was illegal; second, all new laws must be sanctioned by parliament; and third, ministerial abuses and mismanagement could be inquired into and remedied by parliament. In 1332 parliament adopted the plan of meeting in two houses: the greater barons, clerical and lay, sat in one assembly; the knights of the shire and representatives of the urban centres in another. The union of the knights of the shire, who were lesser barons, and the townsmen was destined to have far-reaching results upon England's history; for the lesser barons gave to the House of Commons an air of respectability and sense of responsibility, and broke down caste-barriers which in other states in western Europe existed until the eighteenth century. It was the House of Commons which attempted in Edward's reign to assert three constitutional rights which, when established, completely undermined the autocratic power of the sovereign: first, the voting of funds was made conditional on the redress of grievances; second, the right to audit the accounts connected with the money voted; and third, the voting of funds for specific purposes. To control the royal purse was to control the royal ministers. Early in Edward's reign Lords and Commons petitioned that ministers and judges should be appointed in parliament; and in 1376 the *Good Parliament* boldly impeached the ministers for mismanagement of national affairs.

There is something pathetically tragic about Edward's kingly career, and it is well brought out by a mediæval chronicler.

> For as in his beginning all things were joyful and liking to him and to all the people; and in mid age he passed all men in high joy and blessedness; right so, when he drew into age, drawing downward through lechery and sins, little and little all the joyful and blessed things, good fortune and prosperity decreased and mis-shaped, and unfortunate things and unprofitable harms, with many evils, began for to spring, and, the more harm is, continued long time after.

Vertue.

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EDWARD III.

In the latter years of his long reign the great Edward, whose knightly deeds had resounded from one end of Europe to another, was the doting lover of the adventuress Alice Perrers. He showered gifts upon her, and allowed her to interfere in the government; and he was purposely deaf to all criticisms levied against her. Backed up by the Black Prince, the members of the *Good Parliament*, however, banished her from the royal presence; but the prince died in 1376 before the parliament-men had time to consolidate their position; and to strengthen his own hands John of Gaunt, when he reversed the proceedings of that parliament and punished its leading members, allowed the Perrers woman to return to his half-imbecile father.

When the shadow of death hung over Edward in that swelteringly hot June of 1377 she was at his bedside, watching like a harpy to pounce upon its prey; and when unconsciousness came to him she forced the rings off his fingers and ransacked his treasure chests, and fled with them from the palace at Sheen. One by one the household servants crept away, until only one chaplain remained in the palace; and to him fell the duty of placing the crucifix in the dying man's hands and closing his eyes when the last breath passed out of his body. Edward died on 21st June 1377, and was buried in Westminster Abbey by the side of his queen, who passed to her rest in 1373.

All the Plantagenets were handsome men, but Edward III. was perhaps the handsomest of them all; and a contemporary related how his face was "as the face of a god." Men were much attracted by his friendly voice and courteous manners; and his skill in all knightly exercises marked him down as a natural leader of great nobles whose thoughts centred round jousts and tournaments. He was not a great general because he was not a good organiser; but none was his equal in the art of inspiring men to stirring deeds; and the calmness with which a handful of English went into action at Crécy against the might of France's chivalry was the outcome of a sublime confidence in Edward's gift of leadership. He was not a great king: an overweening ambition to become master of France and a shameful extravagance in his public and private life made Edward indifferent to his kingdom's welfare; and consequently his subjects never loved him in the same way as their ancestors had loved his grandfather Edward I.

The social and constitutional changes which this reign witnessed have already been touched upon. There were other changes equally important. Throughout the country, largely as the outcome of the residence of the popes at Avignon and the papal practice of preferring foreigners to English livings, there emerged that feeling of hostility towards Rome which was the prelude of the Reformation; and the luxurious living which was insinuated into ecclesiastical life provided those early "reformers" with a powerful argument in support of their thesis that until the Church was stripped of her wealth she would not

again become a spiritual force in the world. The foundation of England's commercial prosperity was laid during this reign when the government protected the woollen manufacturing industry. In 1331 Edward induced Flemish weavers to settle in his kingdom; in the following year he forbade his subjects to wear clothes made from imported cloths; and in 1337 a ban was even placed on these foreign imported cloths. It is true that after the outbreak of the war with France, when he sought to use Flanders as a "back entry" into the French king's territories, Edward abandoned his protectionist policy; but by that time the woollen manufacturing industry in England was firmly on its feet, and when the competition with Flanders came it could be successfully met.

ON 16TH JULY 1377 Richard II., the eldest surviving son of the Black Prince, was crowned in great state in Westminster Abbey by Archbishop Simon Sudbury of Canterbury. To Adam Usk, who witnessed the splendid spectacle, the ten years' old king appeared "fair among men as another Absalom." Three days after the coronation parliament met to appoint a council to guide the boy-king, and it was significant that no place in it was found for John of Gaunt, the king's uncle.

Uncles were to be the plague of Richard's young life. His grandfather Edward III. had fathered twelve children, seven sons and five daughters, and he had secured for them territorial status befitting their rank. Only three of these sons were alive in 1377: John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster and self-styled King of Castile; Edmund of Langley, Earl of Cambridge and later to be created Duke of York; and Thomas of Woodstock, upon whom immediately after Richard's coronation was bestowed the earldom of Buckingham and much later the dukedom of Gloucester. John of Gaunt was already suspected of having designs upon the throne: this was the reason for his exclusion from the council of regency. He was an ambitious man, and not overscrupulous, and he had the awkward knack of always being on wrong side of the fence. Edmund of Langley, on the other hand, was a mild-mannered man of little ambition. He was placed on the council of regency, and remained consistently faithful to his nephew until his deposition in 1399. Thomas of Woodstock was in 1377 an unknown political quantity, but he was of imperious temper, headstrong, and impolitic; and it was not to be expected that he would allow himself to be overshadowed by his elder brothers.

Thus the earlier part of Richard's reign was taken up with a fierce rivalry between John of Gaunt and Thomas of Woodstock. It began in 1381, when the former's son and heir, Henry of Bolingbroke, was married to Mary de Bohun. Thomas of Woodstock was married to her elder sister, and he had hoped to secure undisputed control of the vast de Bohun lands by inducing his sister-in-law Mary to take the veil. The marriage wrecked that plan, and Thomas of

Woodstock believed that his eldest brother had carried it through in order to trick him. The bad feeling was intensified by the fact that Henry of Bolingbroke by assuming the title of Earl of Derby took precedence over his uncle; and when John of Gaunt successfully tried to gain a voice in the government the jealousy of Thomas of Woodstock knew no bounds.

Very early in his reign Richard was brought face to face with a serious crisis, and his handling of it shows that he had inherited much of his father's spirit. At their wits' end for money, the government in 1380 levied a poll-tax upon the country. Theoretically, the burden was to be fairly shared among the king's subjects; but in actual fact the rich were more favourably assessed than the poor, and in those districts where the joys of economic freedom were beginning to be felt this poll-tax was regarded as the last straw. Ugly threats were uttered against the landlords, and popular preachers with strong communist leanings easily persuaded the discontented that nothing short of a social revolution would put things right in the country. In the early summer of 1381, therefore, the men of Essex and Kent took up arms and marched to London to demand their rights and the dismissal of the king's "evil counsellors." They secured admission into the capital, and sacked and burned the Savoy, John of Gaunt's London house, the Temple, the home of the lawyers, and the Priory of St John at Clerkenwell, of which Robert Hales, the treasurer, was prior. How in the confusion which ensued Richard faced the rebels at Mile End, and promised to be their leader after Lord Mayor William Walworth had cut down Wat Tiler, the leader of the contingent from Kent, is a story which finds an honoured place in every children's history book. There the emphasis is laid upon his courage, and rightly so, for it undoubtedly saved the capital—and probably England—from all the horrors of mob rule. It was a shattering experience for the young boy as he rode back to his palace at Westminster to meet a party of rebels bearing on pikes the heads of Archbishop Sudbury and Treasurer Hales, whom they had taken from the Tower and murdered.

The one man in the kingdom who might have been able to guide Richard aright was John of Gaunt. He was aware that the real cause of the discontent was the French war, and he was one of the few men in the country who had the courage to plead for a settlement of the quarrel between England and France. But he was the most unpopular man in the country, chiefly owing to his championship of Wiclif against Bishop Courtenay of London; and his constructive suggestions were met with the warning that Englishmen would have "no king called John" to rule over them. His patronage of Wiclif brought all the influence of the Church against him: he was the friend of heretics, so the clergy said, and their congregations believed them.

In the meantime Richard had fallen under the domination of a court party, which was headed by Robert de Vere, Earl of Oxford; and the arrogant behaviour

of some of its members, particularly of Thomas Earl of Nottingham and William Earl of Salisbury, aroused the enmity of men like Richard Earl of Arundel, Thomas Earl of Warwick, and Thomas of Woodstock. For long enough John of Gaunt stood between these two parties in order to prevent an armed clash; and although he served his country well by doing so he also earned the dislike of both parties. Oxford and his friends were the first to plot for his overthrow; but John of Gaunt was too many for them, and he had little difficulty in clearing himself on the charges brought against him (1384). Richard was nevertheless convinced that his uncle was not his friend, and he welcomed the opportunity of getting him out of the kingdom when in 1386 he set out with his duchess to make good her claim to the throne of Castile.

Once John of Gaunt was safely out of the way the two parties were quickly at each other's throats. In October 1386 the baronial opposition secured the dismissal in parliament of the royal ministers; but Richard, acting under the influence of Oxford and his friends and on the opinion of a sycophantic bench of judges, asserted his authority; and the dismissed ministers were restored to favour. By the autumn of 1387 a clash between the king's friends and the baronial party was inevitable. In November the latter stood under arms at Waltham and informed the king that they were resolved to "appeal" as traitors, Oxford, the chancellor Suffolk, Archbishop Nevil of York, and Lord Chief Justice Robert Tresilian. Richard would have met force with force, but the cooler heads in his party urged him to treat with the opposition; and on 17th November he met them at Gloucester and promised to accept their demand for a parliamentary impeachment of his friends. Richard never for a moment meant to keep that promise: he yielded to gain time; and when the parliament assembled, nearly all his friends had made their escape from London. Oxford went straight to Cheshire, a county peculiarly attached to the king; raised an army there; and marched to meet his enemies. But he was overthrown at Radcot Bridge, and only with the greatest difficulty managed to get out of the country (December). Richard was beaten to his knees: there was no alternative for him but to surrender to the baronial demands.

Thomas of Woodstock was the leader of this baronial opposition: his chief supporters were Derby, Warwick, Arundel, and Nottingham, who had soon deserted from the ranks of the court party; and the five of them have passed into history as the Lords Appellants. "The parlement that wrought wonders" or "Merciless Parliament" of 1388 endorsed their victory: Richard's friends were savagely punished, and the control of the government was vested in a council dominated by the Lords Appellants. The country soon took accurate measure of these men who boasted that they were the champions of the cause of good government, and disgusted at the way in which they used their power to enrich themselves and their friends the bulk of the people rallied to Richard's side.

Unknown Artist.

Reproduced by Courtesy of The National Portrait Gallery.

RICHARD II.

Moreover, jealousy and suspicion divided the Lords Appellants themselves. Derby, young though he was, undoubtedly sensed his uncle Thomas's intentions; and he owed it to his absent father, the eldest brother, to resist them with all his might. Nottingham sided with him against Thomas of Woodstock and Arundel. Poor Warwick, a born trimmer, was in an agony of indecision as to which side to join.

Aware of the popular feeling against the Lords Appellants and of the dissensions within their own ranks, Richard acted. In a meeting of the council he reminded them that "every heir that is once come to the age of twenty years is permitted to order his business himself;" and he followed up this observation with the unanswerable question, "why is the same right denied me?" Thomas of Woodstock and Arundel were completely taken off their guard: Derby and Nottingham probably knew before they went to the council what line the king meant to take. The result was that Richard freed himself from the unwelcome control of his uncle, and the country applauded his action (1389).

From 1389 until 1397 Richard ruled his kingdom well. His generosity towards the Lords Appellants amazed men: it was an age when vengeance was taken in the hour of triumph; he appeared to desire the obliteration of the memories of the past; and he applied himself to the business of government with energy and thoroughness. In 1394 he led a great expeditionary force into Ireland. It was the first time an English king had visited the island since the days of Henry II.; and his presence there soon restored some semblance of order in a land which had been allowed to relapse into anarchy during his grandfather's reign. He tackled the vexed question of the French war courageously, throwing all his weight into the scales on the side of the peace party; and his marriage to Isabella, the daughter of the French king, was accompanied by a long period truce. His patronage of learning caused Gower to dedicate to him his *Confessio Amantis* and Froissart to present him with a finely bound copy of his love poems; he ordered the rebuilding of Westminster Hall, and begun the reconstruction of one of the naves in the abbey church.

Then a great change came over him. The cause of it is still a subject for argument among historians. Had he for eight years fought back the demon of vengeance, and then surrendered to it? Or, had he all along planned to punish those who had humbled him and slain his friends, and waited patiently for an opportunity to strike them down? The death of his first queen, Anne of Bohemia, from the plague in 1394 undoubtedly produced a marked change in him: he was so deeply attached to her that not only could he never bear to visit Sheen where they had lived together so happily, but he even gave orders for the palace to be razed to the ground. In the following year (1395) he ordered the dead body of his friend Oxford to be brought to England for burial

in the family vault at Earls Colne in Essex; and insisted that the coffin should be opened so that he could see once again his friend's face and press his hand.

Probably the immediate cause of Richard's decision to take vengeance on his uncle Thomas, Arundel, and Warwick was their opposition to the peace with France. They played on the national pride by criticising the concession which had been made when Richard decided to bring the two nations closer together by marrying a French princess; and there is little doubt that the king himself suspected that there was a plan on foot to repeat the action taken in 1387–8. So he struck before they did, and in the summer of 1397 he arrested his uncle Thomas, Arundel, and Warwick. Arundel was tried by his peers, condemned to death and executed: Warwick, "like a wretched old woman he made confession of all," was sentenced to perpetual imprisonment. Thomas of Woodstock died in a Calais prison, and the "confession" which he was said to have made before his death was read to parliament. Actually few people believed that he had died from natural causes: the popular suspicion was that he had been murdered by Nottingham, in whose charge he had been placed.

Whatever view is taken of Richard's punishment of the three Lords Appellants the fact remains that his actions were wholeheartedly endorsed by John of Gaunt, Edmund of Langley, and the two other Lords Appellants, Derby and Nottingham, who were advanced to the dukedoms of Hereford and Norfolk respectively as a reward for their loyal service; and this behaviour at least lends colour to the contention of the king that the condemned men were at the head of a conspiracy to overthrow him.

In Norfolk's heart a terrible fear lurked: he was convinced that Richard would make a clean sweep of the Lords Appellants; and he communicated his fears to Hereford. The Duke ridiculed the whole thing, pointing out that they had royal pardons for their actions in 1387–8; but Norfolk reminded him that royal pardons had also been granted to the dead men. Hereford repeated these warnings to his father John of Gaunt, who either communicated them to Richard or advised his son to do so. The result was that the king placed the two dukes under arrest pending a full inquiry into the allegations. It is difficult to know what happened next. Adam Usk, who was well informed about the events of 1398–9, stated that in the parliament which reassembled at Shrewsbury early in 1398 "the duke of Hereford . . . appealed the duke of Norfolk of treason." Our confusion is now worse confounded. Only a short time before their arrest they were friends; immediately afterwards they were enemies. It is true that during the parliament of Shrewsbury "the duke of Norfolk . . . laid snares of death against the duke of Lancaster as he came thither;" but that incident apparently took place in the autumn of 1397 and therefore before the two dukes had had their fatal conversation; and it is

known that Lancaster and Norfolk were reconciled before Christmas of that year. The mystery will perhaps never be solved.

Hereford and Norfolk appeared in parliament before Richard in February 1398, and the former challenged the latter to "battell" on the ground that he was a "traitor, false and disloyal to the king, and enemy unto the realm." Norfolk vehemently denied the accusation, and retaliated by making a similar accusation against Hereford. Richard at first endeavoured to compose the quarrel: messengers were sent to the dukes to inform them that he "would be ready to pardon all that had been said or done amiss betwixt them, touching any harm or dishonour to him or his realm;" but both replied that "it was not possible to have any peace or agreement made betwixt them." Richard did not abandon his efforts at mediation, he saw both dukes personally, but they continued obdurate, and stolidly refused to make peace. The matter was thereupon referred to the council, and it was while they were in the council chamber that Hereford threw down his gage and Norfolk picked it up. Now out of patience with them Richard swore "by Saint John Baptist" that they should fight the matter out.

The combat was to be held at Coventry, and great preparations were made for it. But no sooner were the two dukes moving forward to meet in combat than Richard ordered them to desist and to come before him; and to the utter amazement of the assembled company he banished Norfolk for life, and Hereford for ten years. Out of consideration for his uncle John of Gaunt the latter sentence was subsequently reduced to six years.

Richard's behaviour throughout is inexplicable. Why was he so eager to compose the quarrel? It has been suggested that there was something which he wished to hide—perhaps a knowledge of Norfolk's plot against John of Gaunt at the opening of the Shrewsbury parliament; perhaps he feared that Norfolk would say that in the sorry business of Thomas of Woodstock's death he had merely acted under instructions. And why should both men be punished? We are told that both submitted to the verdict "humbly." Men of spirit are not in the habit of accepting an injustice without protest.

With Hereford and Norfolk out of the country Richard made ready to enjoy the pleasures of a fool's paradise. The ordinary revenues of the crown would not meet the cost of his extravagances, and he resorted to loans forced out of rich subjects and corporations. His bodyguard of Cheshire archers stalked arrogantly through the country, "everywhere committing adulteries, murders, and other evils without end." The king himself spent his days and nights in the company of the lowest companions, dicing and drinking. It was not to be wondered at, therefore, that many in the land "spoke much and loudly of Derby's return."

Early in February 1399 John of Gaunt died: five weeks later, despite a

promise that the Lancastrian estates would not be forfeited in the event of the old duke dying during his son's banishment, Richard took possession of them. This act of faithlessness drove Hereford to take action, and when in the summer Richard sailed for Ireland the exiled duke in Paris swiftly prepared to return home to claim his own. He landed at Ravenspur near Grimsby on 4th July with no more than " fifteen lances ; " but the Percies and Nevils of the Scottish march flocked to his standard, and by the time he reached Leicester he had anything from 60,000 to 100,000 at his back. At Berkeley the loyalist forces under the regent, Edmund of Langley, refused to fight : Edmund himself went over to his nephew's side. By the end of the first week in August Hereford was at Chester, having marched rapidly through the Welsh march from Bristol ; and by the middle of the month Richard, who had returned from Ireland and gone to join his adherents in North Wales, was a prisoner.

Mounted on " a sorry nag " his captor led him to London and shut him up in the Tower. The people railed at him as he passed, shouting at him curses and spitting in his face ; and on 28th or 29th September a parliamentary deputation waited upon him and compelled him to sign a deed of abdication. On the 30th Lords and Commons chose Hereford as their king. Richard's fate is shrouded in mystery. Disguised as a forester he was taken from the Tower to Leeds Castle in Kent, but he did not remain there long, and was finally removed into the north country, being successively a prisoner in the Lancastrian castles of Pickering, Knaresborough, and Pontefract. At the last-named castle his gaoler was Sir Thomas Swynford, son of the woman whom John of Gaunt kept first as a mistress and then married ; and about the middle of February the unhappy prisoner was starved to death. The body was buried at the church of the Dominicans at King's Langley.

CHAPTER IV

THE LANCASTRIANS

Henry IV. *of Bolingbroke*: 1399–1413
Henry V. *of Monmouth*: 1413–1422
Henry VI. *of Windsor*: 1422–1461, 1470–1471

THE ACCESSION OF Henry IV. was a violation of the rule that the crown of England was a *property* which passed from king to king by hereditary right. Had this rule been respected in 1399 Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, would have become king on Richard's abdication: he was descended from Lionel of Clarence, the second of Edward III.'s seven sons, and in Richard's reign his claim had been freely admitted. But he was a boy: moreover, he could not claim, as Henry claimed, the crown "by way of conquest." There was, however, an equally ancient rule that monarchy in England was *elective*, and in this respect Henry's title to the throne was flawless, for it was readily accepted and endorsed by parliament. Therein lay the strength and weakness of his position: he could always declare that he was the nation's choice; but parliament, on the other hand, could always remind him that what they had given could be taken away; and it was therefore imperative that he should remain on the best terms with the parliament-men.

In the eyes of many of his subjects Henry was a usurper, despite the soundness of his parliamentary title. They might have been ready to admit that the usurpation was necessary; but national necessity is quickly obscured by the incidents of strong government; and a factious element requires few excuses for relapsing into lawlessness. Moreover, it is the fate of usurpers to come into conflict with the interests of those who have assisted in the usurpation, primarily for what they can get out of it; and unfulfilled promises are a sure cause of discontent.

Thus Henry's short reign was "an unquiet time." He inherited a French war and Scottish enmity, and was called upon to meet a nationalist rising in Wales and baronial rebellions at home. Great though his private fortune was, it was quickly dissipated in the work of consolidating his kingship; and his appeals to parliament for money were grudgingly met. But he was a purposeful man, who courageously faced difficulties; and patience and confidence, qualities with which he was richly endowed, enabled him to overcome them. Indeed it

might truthfully be said that the pedestrian character of his qualities made it possible for him to rise to the occasions which confronted him: his inherent conservatism immunised him from attacks of revolutionary ardour; his fund of sound common sense provided the means of grasping essentials and appreciating conciliatory measures; and his high conception of kingly duty enabled him to bear all the inconveniences of a loathsome and incurable disease.

Henry was in the full vigour of manhood when he came to the throne in 1399. He was born on 3rd April 1367 in his father's castle of Bolingbroke in Lincolnshire; but before he was three years old the plague robbed him of his charming mother, Blanche of Lancaster, whom Chaucer immortalised as the "Whyte Lady;" and his early years were spent in the company of men and women employed by his father to minister to his childish needs and look after his education. Married shortly before his fourteenth birthday to one of the de Bohun heiresses, he was quickly drawn into the vortex of political life; and, as we have already seen, was one of the opposition to Oxford's influence over Richard II. in 1387–8. In 1390 Henry became a soldier of fortune. It was his intention to join an expedition financed by the rich Venetian merchants to attack El Mahadia (Tunis), the lair of the corsairs who preyed upon life and property in the Mediterranean; but for some reason or other he changed his mind at the last moment and set off on a *reysa* or expedition to Lithuania, there to assist the Teutonic Knights against the pagan Lithuanians. He quickly established a reputation as a good soldier; was present at "the Battle of the Pagans," fought near Alt Kowno (August); and did yeoman service in the operations before Vilna. He returned home in the spring of 1391. But the life of adventure appealed to him, and in July he went back to his friends in Lithuania. His services, however, were no longer required; and he thereupon decided to take a trip to Palestine. Journeying overland to Venice, where he was right royally entertained by Antonio Vernieri, the doge, he chartered a galley, and two or three days before Christmas 1391 sailed away for Jaffa, which was reached at the end of January; for Henry had dallied in Rhodes to pay his respects to the Grand Master Heredia of the Order of Knights Hospitaller of St John of Jerusalem. His entry to the Holy City was made on the back of an ass: there he visited the Mount of Olives, and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. On his homeward journey he called at Famagusta in Cyprus to visit the king of the island, James of Lusignan, who presented him with a leopard; at Rhodes he again saw the Grand Master Heredia, and from him received a "sarasin," who had embraced the Christian religion and was called Henry; and in the middle of March the galley dropped anchor off Venice. Travelling overland to England he found time to call upon Gian Galeazzo Visconti, Count of Milan, whose sister had married Henry's uncle, Lionel of Clarence; while in the city he visited Clarence's grave and the tombs of

St Augustine and Boethius; after a brief halt in Paris he reached England on 30th June 1392. Two years later Henry lost his wife, who died giving birth to her second daughter Philippa and seventh child.[1]

By experience, therefore, Henry was well qualified to order a kingdom. At the outset of his reign he removed all doubts as to his intentions. In parliament, after the crown was offered to him, he solemnly announced that he meant to rule as a constitutional monarch; and made it clear that there were to be neither recriminations nor acts of vengeance. But his policy of clemency was not appreciated, and early in 1400 Henry was faced by a dangerous conspiracy organised in Richard's interest by the Earls of Huntingdon, Kent, and Salisbury. The back of this rebellion was easily broken: Kent and Salisbury met their death at the hands of a Cirencester mob; and a similar fate was meted out to Huntingdon by the men of Essex. How far Henry himself was implicated in Richard's murder it is impossible to say. At the beginning of his reign he was certainly opposed to violence, and was sharply criticised by his friends for his restraint; but the revolt of the earls demonstrated the insecurity of his position as long as Richard lived; and while he may not actually have ordered his cousin's death, his friends may have acted in full knowledge that the king would be relieved by the removal of such a dangerous rival.

Relations with Scotland at once claimed Henry's attention. The truce negotiated by Richard's government expired at the end of September 1399: it was in Henry's interests that it should be renewed. But the Scots were reluctant to put themselves in a position of being unable to take advantage of the internal disorders which they believed would follow the usurpation; they sat cannily on the fence and waited. In June 1400 they put forward the suggestion that the Treaty of Northampton of 1328 should be the basis of discussions between the two countries; and in August Henry marched an army into Scotland to enforce his overlordship. It was a Pyrrhic victory which he gained over the Scots: after the English army had taken Edinburgh and failed to take Dalhousie negotiations were opened, the Scots promising to give careful consideration to the claim of overlordship; but no sooner was Henry back in England than the border warfare was continued. Douglas, an implacable enemy of the English, had control of the government in the northern kingdom, and in February 1402 he put forward as a *casus belli* the charge that the Percies disturbed the peace of the Border. Henry defended them, but the Percy interests were involved in the Welsh rebellion, and it was not long before this powerful family was arrayed against the king. Self-interest, however, for the moment compelled loyalty: until Douglas' power was broken they were bound to stand by the government. On 14th September 1402 at Humbledon

[1] There is good reason for thinking that Mary de Bohun gave birth to a child within a year of her marriage to Henry: it was either still-born or died soon after birth.

Hill the Percies smashed a powerful Scottish army, and among the many prisoners taken was Douglas himself.

In the meantime Henry had tackled the Anglo-French problem. The fact that Richard's queen was a French princess created a delicate situation. Her parents naturally feared that she might suffer the same fate as her husband, and they were anxious that she should be repatriated. At the same time they claimed in accordance with the terms of the marriage treaty that Isabella should be allowed to retain a portion of her dowry and those presents given to her at her marriage. In hard cash this represented 200,000 francs. Henry, at his wits' end for money, sought to avoid this repayment by proposing that Isabella should marry one of his own sons; but the French would not entertain the proposal, and thereupon skilfully put forward a counter-claim—the unpaid portion of the ransom of the French king John, amounting to 1,200,000 crowns. For weeks the diplomats argued: finally a settlement, wholly satisfactory to Henry though it left unsettled the financial claims and counter-claims, was reached; and early in July 1401 Isabella was taken back to her native country.

Throughout the remainder of 1401 and during the whole of 1402 representatives of the two countries met to deal with the outstanding claims; but no agreement was reached; and the result was that there was every likelihood of a reopening of the struggle initiated by Edward III. French pirates, encouraged by responsible French noblemen, raided the English coast during the summer of 1403; and in the following year a Welsh embassy was received at the French court.

The Welsh rebellion was perhaps the most serious of Henry's difficulties. A personal feud between an English marcher, Grey of Ruthin, and a Welsh squire, Owen Glyn Dŵr, was allowed, chiefly through Henry's complete misunderstanding of the issues involved, to degenerate into a bloody racial war. Quickly the flames of revolt spread throughout Wales, and the English government's efforts to quench them were for some years quite unsuccessful. Powerful armies were sent into the principality, but the Welsh refused to be lured into open engagements, and their skilful use of guerilla tactics demoralised the English soldiery probably more effectively than a defeat in ordered battle. At Pilleth in June 1402 the Welsh overthrew an English army, and captured Sir Edmund Mortimer, the uncle of the *lawful* king; and within six months the prisoner was married to one of Owen Glyn Dŵr's daughters. Henry, believing that Mortimer was guilty of treason, refused to ransom him: this angered Henry Percy, called *Hotspur*, the son of the Earl of Northumberland; and, when the king demanded that the prisoners taken at Humbledon Hill should be handed over to him, the Percies decided to throw in their lot with the Welsh rebels. In the summer of 1403 *Hotspur* marched south to join Owen Glyn Dŵr; but at Shrewsbury Henry brought him to battle; and in "the

worst battle that ever came to England, and the unkindest," *Hotspur* was defeated and slain (21st July).

The Welsh rebels were not engaged at Shrewsbury: for some reason which cannot be explained Owen Glyn Dŵr refrained from making a juncture with the Percy army, although it would have been an easy matter for him to have done so; and Henry's victory was a set-back to the Welsh cause. But it was only temporary: the English failure to restore order within the principality itself gave encouragement to the Welsh living in those districts where the English influence was strongest; and early in the spring of 1404 Owen Glyn Dŵr was elected Prince of Wales by a native parliament assembled at Machynlleth. A Franco-Welsh alliance negotiated later in the same year brought a French expeditionary force to Wales; and by June so serious was the situation from the English standpoint that the young Henry of Monmouth, who had been appointed in the previous year to undertake the pacification of his principality, gravely warned his father and the council that " unless you make provision for us we shall be compelled to depart with disgrace and mischief, and the country will be utterly destroyed."

The English government were obviously frightened, and in the summer of 1405 Henry in person led his fifth expeditionary force into Wales. Again he failed to force an engagement: again his force was mercilessly harassed by guerilla bands as it marched ponderously back to Hereford. Critics safe in London and elsewhere were not slow to blame him for his failures, and unfavourably to compare them with the successes of his son; and there is little doubt that he was soured by these reminders. It must be admitted that Henry showed little foresight in his dealings with Wales. The rebellion gathered force owing to his refusal to inquire into causes of the quarrel between Grey and Owen Glyn Dŵr; and it remained a thorn in his side because he ignored the experience of those of his royal predecessors who had fought successfully in Wales. Fortunately his son Henry of Monmouth tackled the problem in a thoroughly intelligent manner: he quickly perceived the benefits to be gained from a conciliatory policy, and when fighting had to be done he fought the Welshmen in their own way. His victory over one of Owen Glyn Dŵr's ablest captains, Rhys Gethin, at Grosmont in the spring of 1405 was the turning-point in the rebellion; and, as will be seen in the account of his reign, within three years he could truthfully claim to have broken the Welsh leader's power in Wales.

The defection of the Percies brought great sorrow to Henry. They had been among the first to rally to his side when he landed in Yorkshire in 1399; and he had a strong and sincere affection for Northumberland and his son *Hotspur*. But the Percies had undoubtedly joined the movement against Richard in the hope that they would be able to advance their own personal interests under the new king; and when Henry's determination not to tolerate self-seeking

factiousness disappointed their hopes they became resentful and uneasy in their allegiance. They had three grievances against Henry: first, he favoured their rivals, the Nevils; second, he showed a disposition to interfere in the affairs of the Anglo-Scottish border; and, third, he was reluctant to pay them for the services which they rendered the kingdom in keeping the peace of the border.

Actually Henry was not ungenerous in his treatment of the Percies. He could not be blamed for making friends of the Nevils: they were consistently loyal to him. To have allowed the Percies a free hand in border affairs would have resulted in a diminution of the royal authority in the north of England. It is true that the Percies spent on Henry's behalf vast sums in maintaining armed forces capable of resisting the Scottish incursions into the northern shires; but Henry's poverty made it difficult for him to recompense them in full for their services; and he could retaliate by saying that in acting as the guardians of the northern frontier they were protecting their vested interests.[1] No doubt always at the back of the Percies' minds was the memory that by their aid Henry had won a throne; and it would be only human for them to argue that owing everything to them he ought to reward them generously.

No sooner was the battle of Shrewsbury fought and won than Henry dashed northwards to deal with the old earl. Northumberland made so feeble a show of resistance that he was speedily compelled to ask for pardon. Henry was not vindictive towards his old friend: when, after trial by his peers, the earl was condemned to pay a heavy fine, part of it was remitted by the king, and a reconciliation followed. But Northumberland now had another grievance: his favourite son *Hotspur* was dead, and he longed for the chance to avenge his death. In May 1405 he thought the time ripe to try conclusions with Henry; and joined by Archbishop Richard Scrope of York, the young Thomas Earl of Nottingham, and Thomas Lord Bardolph of Wormegay they raised the north under the pretext of wishing to effect much-needed reforms in the government. But on their own admission the rebel leaders were in treasonable correspondence with Owen Glyn Dŵr; and there is no doubt whatever that their object was to oust Henry from the throne and replace him by the Earl of March, whose youth would make him dependent upon their favours and services. It was Westmorland who broke the rebellion: by a ruse he took the archbishop and Nottingham prisoners, and then sending one of his retinue to the rebel force drawn up on Shipton Moor to the north of York he told the simple countrymen that "the archbishop commandeth every man for to go home." Henry himself was soon on the scene, and sharp measures were taken to punish the rebels. The archbishop and Nottingham were summarily tried and executed, although Archbishop Thomas fitzAlan of Canterbury pleaded with him not to stain his hands with the blood of the former

[1] Henry had actually paid the Percies more than £40,000 in cash, and had granted them lands in addition.

(June). Northumberland and Bardolph retreated into the north, but the royal forces went after them, and being unable to save themselves they fled for sanctuary to Scotland.

Even in Scotland they were no longer safe. Douglas, whom the Percies had taken prisoner at Humbledon Hill, fought with *Hotspur* at Shrewsbury; and he was now a prisoner in London. Henry, therefore, let it be known that he would exchange him for Northumberland and Bardolph; and when the old earl learnt of this proposal through a friend he and Bardolph bolted for Wales (February 1406). There they were warmly welcomed by Owen Glyn Dŵr and Sir Edmund Mortimer; and at Aberdaron, Northumberland, Owen, and Mortimer drew up and signed the famous *Tripartite Indenture*, whereby they impudently agreed to parcel England and Wales between themselves when they had overthrown Henry. In the summer of 1406 Northumberland and Bardolph sailed to France and were hospitably entertained at the French court: they then proceeded to Flanders to collect men and arms for an attack on England.

That attack was delivered in January 1408. At Thirsk, Northumberland proclaimed that he had returned to rid the kingdom of an oppressor, and to claim his own. No man living could remember such a hard winter: the countryside was covered with snow and ice; and it was therefore a difficult matter quickly to move troops against the rebels. But Sir Thomas Rokesby, sheriff of Yorkshire, was a staunch Lancastrian, and he put himself at the head of a local army. At Bramham Moor on 19th February there was a short, sharp fight, during which Northumberland was slain and Bardolph taken. The Percy danger was past.

In the latter part of his reign Henry also had the satisfaction of seeing considerably diminished the danger from the side of France. The murder of the Duke of Orléans in the Rue Barbette in Paris, as it was popularly thought at the instigation of the Duke of Burgundy, initiated the vendetta of Burgundy and Armagnac which divided France for nearly thirty years (1407). Both sides looked about for allies; and Burgundian and Armagnac envoys were soon in London. Henry of Monmouth, called upon to deputise for his sick father as the head of the government, favoured the former, and a force was sent to assist the Burgundians. But on recovery Henry reversed this policy: the Burgundian alliance was repudiated, and another English force went to France, but this time to aid the Armagnacs. This conflict of policies resulted in an estrangement between father and son. The news went round that the prince was openly disloyal to the king; and in the summer of 1412 it became necessary for him publicly to give the lie to these rumours.

Henry's reign is full of interest for the constitutional historian. It was constitutionally a period of consolidation. The king's poverty placed him at the mercy of parliament; but Henry handled the parliament-men extremely

well; and although there were clashes there was no spectacular constitutional crisis. The parliament-men claimed the right to control the nominations to the king's council; and Henry met them more than half-way when on 1st March 1404 he allowed the names of his council to be read in parliament. But a demand that he should render to parliament an account of the expenditure of monies voted to him was met with the curt observation that "kings do not give account." Equally curt was the reply of the Speaker Tiptot: "then their officers must;" and only Henry's illness prevented the matter from being thoroughly thrashed out (1406). In the same parliament were drawn up the *Thirty-one Articles*, which Hallam extravagantly described as "a noble fabric of constitutional liberty, and hardly perhaps inferior to the Petition of Right under Charles I." In brief, these demands were moderate: they stressed the need for a "continual council" to remain in session until the meeting of the next parliament; the royal revenues were to be strictly appropriated; petitions were to be regularly heard; the appointment and functions of the sheriffs were regulated; and the council was charged to inquire into the cause of the prevalent unrest, and to see that common law rules were rigidly upheld. In the last parliaments of the reign were heard echoes of the disagreement between Henry and his eldest son. There was a proposal that the king should abdicate in his son's favour, but it was never seriously entertained; and when the last parliament of the reign met in 1411, Henry had the parliamentary situation so well in hand that he could tartly tell the Speaker Chaucer not to introduce "novelties." And the rebuke brought forth a humble apology from the Speaker.

There is something heroic about the gallant way in which Henry conducted the business of government in the last years of his reign. Apparently while serving in Lithuania he contracted one of the deadliest of mediæval diseases, gangrenous ergotism; and after 1405 its ravages were so severe that for long periods he was completely incapacitated. Great "pushes like teats" stood out on his face and hands; his fingers and his toes dropped off; and he was a loathsome sight to look upon. Naturally he himself was shy of his appearance, and in the last years only his most trusted friends were allowed to come into his presence. It so happened that about 1411 his physicians thought that they had the disease well in hand; and in that year he could write optimistically about his health to the Emperor Sigismund. But during the autumn of 1412 the disease made rapid inroads into his health: he could not ride, and sometimes he was even too weak to walk; and so severe was the pain that often he was heard to cry out that he hoped God would soon take him out of his misery. The end came at last in March 1413. On his way to the tomb of St Edward Confessor in Westminster Abbey he crashed to the ground in a dead faint: he was carried tenderly to the abbot's lodgings, and laid upon a pallet of straw in a room called the Jerusalem or Bethlehem Chamber. At his side stood his

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HENRY IV.

dearest friend, Archbishop fitzAlan of Canterbury; in the chamber, too, was his eldest son; and his confessor, Dr John Tille. Once they thought he was dead, and on the advice of those in attendance Henry of Monmouth took up the crown. At that moment the dying man recovered consciousness. "What right have you to it, my son," he said, "seeing that I had none?" The prince replied: "Sire, as you have held and kept it by the sword, so will I hold and keep it while my life shall last." The king was too weary to argue. Just before he died he requested the prince to come near so that he might kiss him; and when they had kissed he delivered his farewell message, charging the young man "to love the Lord thy God," to choose a "man of wisdom and prudence" as his confessor, and energetically to rule his people. And then he fell back on the pillows and died (20th March 1413).

HENRY V. WAS born at Monmouth on 9th August 1387. He was a puny, ill-conditioned child, and at birth few believed that he would survive; but one of the Montacute ladies volunteered to act as his wet nurse, and at her breasts he thrived and grew strong. His mother died before he was seven: but in the meantime she had presented him with three brothers and two sisters. The four boys developed a fine affection for each other, and it was never seriously diminished during their lifetime. Thomas (Clarence) was destined to die a soldier's death in France fighting gallantly in his eldest brother's cause; John (Bedford) inherited the thankless task of holding together the French conquests; Humphrey (Gloucester), the patron of scholars and learning, watched over the child-king Henry VI. while Bedford was in France.

Henry was carefully brought up by a succession of tutors who taught him reading and writing, music and knightly exercises. Shortly before his father's banishment in 1398 he was placed in the care of Henry Beaufort, one of John of Gaunt's sons by his mistress Katharine Swynford. The brilliance of Beaufort's scholarly attainments secured for him the chancellorship of the University of Oxford in 1398; and the young Henry was thereupon probably sent by his half-uncle to Queen's College; but his university career was dramatically cut short by his father's banishment, and he was made to remain in attendance at the court. On the Irish expedition Richard behaved handsomely towards him, even when it was known that his father had landed in Yorkshire to avenge his wrongs; but when the royal forces hastened back to meet the invader the young Henry was honourably confined in Trim Castle, and from there he was brought when his father's cause triumphed. In the first parliament of Henry IV.'s reign the boy was formally created Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall, and Earl of Chester; and was declared the lawful heir to the throne: a few days later his father bestowed upon him the additional titles of Duke of Lancaster and Duke of Aquitaine.

The young Henry was quickly brought face to face with realities during the Welsh rebellion. He accompanied his father into North Wales in October 1400; and in the following year was sent to Chester to direct operations against the rebels. Being much too young for executive responsibility he was consequently placed in the charge of *Hotspur*, the justiciar of North Wales, upon whom actually devolved the work of maintaining the English authority in the northern districts of the principality. *Hotspur* was the ideal tutor for a young prince: hot-tempered and impetuous he might be, but he had a wide experience of border warfare, and he was justly accounted one of the best soldiers of his day. But he soon withdrew from North Wales, and the young Henry had to turn to others for guidance.

In March 1403 the council appointed the prince "the King's Lieutenant in the Marches of Wales." Although only sixteen he diligently applied himself to the task of crushing the rebellion of the Welsh; and shortly after he took up his new duties he conducted a daring raid into the heart of the rebel country, taking Owen Glyn Dŵr's "chief mansion" of Sycharth in Llansilin parish and ravaging his Glyndyfrdwy lands in the valley of the Dee. This raid is memorable because the young Henry had the foresight to carry with him into Wales supplies of stores for men and horses; and this cancelled the advantage which the Welsh hoped to derive from a countryside purposely desolated to impede the English progress. He fought at Shrewsbury, and early in the fight was wounded in the face by an arrow; but, so we learn, "he refused to leave the field lest his departure from amongst his men might have stricken some fear into their hearts."

Upholding the English authority in Wales was at best a thankless task for an energetic young man. Time after time well-laid plans were wrecked owing to lack of funds; and warnings that the rebels would triumph unless money for the payment of troops and the purchase of stores was forthcoming were too often shamelessly disregarded or only partially heeded by the government. Henry's brilliant victory over Rhys Gethin at Grosmont in March 1405 was followed up by a relentless harrying of the retreating rebel forces up the valley of the Usk; and not bothering to attempt the defeat of isolated forces the prince hurled his army against Owen Glyn Dŵr's headquarters at Aberystwyth and Harlech. His first attempt to take the former castle failed owing to the resolute defence of the garrison and their relief by Owen himself (1407); but Henry was not disheartened by this reverse, and in the following year the attack was renewed vigorously. Aberystwyth fell: at the end of the year, or early in 1409, Harlech was also taken. These triumphs virtually represented the end of the rebellion, though Owen Glyn Dŵr himself was never taken, nor would he accept the pardon offered by his gallant young foe; and after 1409 the young Henry's time was wholly taken up with business in London.

It was in the wild country of Wales that the foundation of Henry's military

greatness was laid. The reckless bravery of the Welsh rebels made them a dangerous foe, and their skill in the laying of ambushes and guerilla warfare necessitated the utmost caution and vigilance on the part of the English commanders. During the nine years that he remained in the principality Henry had ample opportunity for observing the deadly accuracy of the shooting of the archers from Gwent (Monmouthshire) and Brycheiniog (Brecknockshire), and the murderous cunning of the knifemen from central Wales; and it is significant that he employed both classes of troops in his French campaigns. More important was the opportunity which he had of coming into contact with the best captains in England; and the men who fought with him against the Welsh were later to march with him into the heart of France, and by their warlike deeds to strike terror into the hearts of the French people.

It used to be believed that Henry's return to London was followed by reckless living and unfilial conduct. But the tales of wild oats generously sown, popularised by Shakespeare, are almost certainly grossly exaggerated; and the story of the prince's committal to prison for contempt of court by Lord Chief Justice Gascoigne is a clumsy anachronism. Undoubtedly after his return from the wars the young man had his "nights out," when he would visit the famous cookshop kept by Lewis John in the Vintry; and there might on those occasions be a good deal of wild fun and boisterous horse-play. How far his morals suffered during this short period it is difficult to say; and there is really no reason for attempting to refute the contemporary allegation that he "fervently followed the service of Venus."

But the other side of the picture represents a very different young man. Soon after his return to London he was appointed to fill important offices of state —the wardenship of the Cinque Ports, the constableship of Dover, the captaincy of Calais; and he was a regular attendant at the meetings of the council. His father's illness was of such a serious nature that his presence in the capital was imperative, and he became the natural leader of the progressive party whose members yearned for the chance to adorn the new dynasty with spectacular achievements, preferably in France. Herein undoubtedly lay the root cause of the disagreement between father and son. Age and ill-health combined to make Henry IV. a conservative, and rather than embark upon grandiose schemes of conquest in France he preferred to consolidate the position which he had won for himself. Solidly behind the young prince, and therefore in opposition to the king, were the Beauforts; and it was Henry Beaufort who made so bold as to advocate the abdication of the king. The suspicion that the young Henry was working for his overthrow embittered Henry IV. against his son; but the prince was soon able to patch up the quarrel; and it was not his fault that it was not wholly effective. During the summer of 1412 a tale went round to the effect that the prince had appropriated to his own use money voted for the defence of Calais.

There is now little doubt that it was a baseless charge deliberately framed to discredit him in the eyes of his fellow-countrymen. He was able to prove his innocence by producing the accounts; and, greatly put out, he appeared before the council to demand that his traducers should either be dismissed or compelled to prove their case. His father, somewhat coldly it is true, promised that the whole matter should be thrashed out in the next parliament. That parliament never met in Henry IV.'s reign, for when the parliament-men rode into London a new king was about to be proclaimed.

On Passion Sunday (9th April) 1413 the young Henry was crowned and hallowed in Westminster Abbey. It was "a sore ruggie and tempestuous day," storms of snow and sleet sweeping over the countryside; and many shook their heads and said that it boded no good for the realm of England. The ceremony was followed by the customary rejoicings, but to everyone's amazement the newly crowned king took no delight in them. It was looked upon as signifying a change of heart in him. The parliament-men graciously transacted the business incidental to a change of sovereigns, and the necessary ministerial adjustments were made without protest or fuss. But the joyousness of the occasion was marred by the fulminations of the Convocation of Canterbury against "the great men of the realm who were favourers of the Lollards;" and it was a plain hint to the new king not to attempt to protect Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, one of his comrades of the Welsh wars and a patron of Lollardy.

It happened that a book belonging to Oldcastle fell into ecclesiastical hands; and he was thereupon summoned to court to explain himself. He obeyed the summons willingly; and passages from the book were read in his presence to Henry and "almost all the prelates and nobles of England." The king was so shocked by what he heard that he confessed that he found it difficult to believe his ears; but Oldcastle protested that he himself had not read the book, though he had glanced at one or two of the folios; and he agreed that it was offensive and ought to be destroyed. No more might have been heard of the matter but for the fact that a group of determined ecclesiastics were bent upon Oldcastle's destruction. Aware of their resolve Henry tried to reason with his old friend, but Oldcastle would not compromise. In September 1413, at the instigation of the clergy, the Lollard patron was arrested and brought to London to stand his trial on a charge of heresy. He asked for and obtained permission to make a declaration of his faith; and the court admitted that it "contained much good catholic truth." To bridge the gaps in this declaration two questions were asked: first, did he believe in transubstantiation? and, second, was auricular confession an essential part of the sacrament of penance? Oldcastle attempted to beg these questions, and protested that he had nothing further to add to the declaration of faith already made; but Archbishop fitzAlan, who

showed every consideration to the accused, reminded him that a refusal to answer would leave the court with no alternative but to convict on the charge of heresy; and so that the Church's teaching might be more fully explained to him the court adjourned. During the adjournment a great change came over Oldcastle. He returned to the court defiant and insolent; and in a torrent of heresy he inveighed against the catholic faith. With "great sorrow and bitterness of heart" the archbishop pronounced Oldcastle guilty of heresy; and the prisoner was thereupon taken to the Tower to await the "burning death" by the secular authorities.

Both Henry and the archbishop tried to find some way of saving Oldcastle. Visitors were sent to him in the hope that he might be persuaded to recant; and a form of recantation was actually drawn up ready for the prisoner to append his signature. It was whispered, too, that it was at Henry's orders that Oldcastle's guard relaxed its vigilance the night he escaped (19th October). But the inexorable law of self-preservation cut the last bonds of friendship between Oldcastle and his royal master; and from his refuge in the country he organised a great conspiracy to overthrow "the priest's prince," as the Lollards called Henry. During November and December 1413 Lollard agents preached treason throughout the kingdom; and their supporters were ordered to parade on 9th January 1414 in Fickett's Field, then a favourite playground of the young clerks in the Chancery. In the face of an obstinate opposition Henry carried through the council a plan for an immediate attack on the rebels; and the promptitude of his action shattered the rebel cause and saved London from being at the mercy of men who boasted that they would burn "Paul's Church to the ground" and hang the bishops. Oldcastle himself remained at large until 1417; and when at last he was taken and brought to trial he boldly declared that he was Richard II.'s man. The account of his trial makes painful reading, for obviously the intrepid soldier of the Welsh wars was no longer in his right mind, but was labouring under a form of religious mania which compelled him to utter the most terrible blasphemies. On 14th December 1417 in the presence of Bedford and a crowd of nobles, few of whom had any liking for the work which had to be done that day, Oldcastle was hanged, and his body was subsequently tied to a stake and burnt.

In the meantime Henry himself had embarked upon his French war. His motives for reopening the struggle have been variously interpreted. In a later age it was believed that the clergy under the leadership of Archbishop Henry Chichele of Canterbury purposely incited Henry to war in order to divert his mind from a proposal to disendow the Church in England. But there is no positive evidence of this, though admittedly the clergy supported him once war was declared. Nowadays it is the fashion to accuse Henry of wilfully provoking a quarrel with France in order

to satisfy his megalomaniacal ambitions. He was undeniably ambitious; and he must have been conscious of his own abilities as a general. On his death-bed he murmured that it was his intention to oust the infidels from Jerusalem; and it has therefore been suggested that his attack on France was a sincere attempt to unite under his leadership the military power of the two kingdoms, and then with a mighty Franco-English army at his back to challenge the infidels' hold on the Holy Land. A more feasible reason for reopening the war would be the belief that the dynasty would best be consolidated by making good the losses which England had suffered in France since the days of Edward, Black Prince. The glories of Crécy and Poitiers were still talked of in town and country; and they might more easily be repeated at a time when the kingdom of France was torn by internal dissensions. Moreover, an organised war would divert the warlike spirits into channels which would not converge in rebellion against the new dynasty.

Armagnac and Burgundian still needed English help; and with great skill one was played off against the other. Both offered Henry a bride as the price of his support: the Armagnacs, Catharine, the daughter of the mad French king Charles VI.; the Burgundians, Catharine, the daughter of Jean *Sans Peur*, Duke of Burgundy. In 1414 the Armagnacs gained the ascendancy over their rivals in France; and Henry thereupon lost no time in acquainting them with his terms. In June an embassy went to Paris not only to demand the hand of Catharine of Valois, but also to lay claim to her father's throne. But the latter demand was obviously not seriously meant, for the leader of the English embassy hastened to inform the French that Henry would be satisfied with the territories ceded to England under the Treaty of Brétigni, the overlordship of Anjou, Brittany, Flanders, Maine, Normandy, and Touraine, and the payment of the balance of King John's ransom. The French were extraordinarily conciliatory. They promised to cede in full sovereignty the duchy of Aquitaine as it existed in the reign of Henry II., to give the Princess Catharine a dowry of 600,000 crowns, and to allow the question of the unpaid portion of the ransom to be settled by further negotiations.

It was some time during the summer of 1414 that the "bitter mock"—the Dauphin's present of tennis balls to Henry—is thought to have occurred. The incident has been disputed, and indeed it is almost incredible that the heir to the French throne should have behaved in such an insolent manner; but the fact remains that the story of the tennis balls was popularly told; and its mention in records which can fairly claim to be more or less contemporary seems to indicate that something happened which aroused Henry's anger against the French. Thus when the next English embassy went to Paris in the early part of 1415, the claim to the French throne was more precisely repeated: in addition, the ambassadors stated Henry's rights in certain specified French lands and

his desire for a marriage with Catharine. The French categorically repudiated his claim to the throne; but expressed a readiness to make concessions in the matter of Aquitaine on condition that the English would wipe out the balance of the ransom; and though they could not dower Catharine with the 2,000,000 crowns proposed by the English they were willing to give her 800,000. Considerable time was spent in haggling over the value of the dowry; and the proceedings were more reminiscent of a stock market than a diplomatic negotiation.

Although last efforts to secure a peaceful settlement were made, the breakdown of the negotiations in Paris in March 1415 virtually committed both sides to war. Henry for long enough had been busily engaged in collecting arms and stores; and by the time a French embassy reached England in June to attempt to arrange the marriage alliance everything was more or less ready for a descent upon France. The repetition of the claim to the French throne caused the leader of the embassy to lose his temper and to remind Henry that Richard was the rightful king; and when the Frenchmen returned to their own land they carried with them an ultimatum which no self-respecting Frenchman could ever accept. The news of the conspiracy organised by Richard Earl of Cambridge, Henry Lord Scrope of Masham, and Sir Thomas Grey of Heton took Henry completely by surprise. All were men whom he trusted; Scrope was one of his dearest friends. But Henry was never a slave to sentiment: the conspirators were arrested, charged with treason, and executed; and the plot was nipped in the bud before it had time to blossom forth into rebellion and civil war.

Henry's objective in France was Harfleur: he saw in the place a convenient base for operations in the Seine country, and he anticipated that the French would not expect him there. After a troublesome voyage in the Channel he was able to effect a landing without opposition, and by 20th August the town was completely encircled with his men. The garrison put up a magnificent defence, and one English assault after another was beaten off. Had the French government taken resolute steps to meet the invaders things would have gone badly for Henry, for an outbreak of " the bloody flux " decimated the besieging army, and it is estimated that no less than 2000 Englishmen died as a result of it. Abandoned by their government, short of stores, constantly urged by the civilians to surrender, the garrison gave up the fight, and on 23rd September Henry made his entry into Harfleur. He treated the civilians with great generosity, and his clemency made a profound impression on them.

On 6th October Henry began one of the most daring marches in military history. The French had refused to give him battle: therefore he would shame them into fighting, for he would march a handful of Englishmen through the heart of France to Calais. He took with him less than 6000 men (900 men-at-arms and 5000 archers), and he planned to follow the coast road. But at

Blanchetâche, the famous ford over the Somme which Edward III. had used on the eve of Crécy, he found his path barred; and turning eastward he determined to march up the river until he was able to effect a crossing. Day after day Henry and his little band marched, only to find every crossing strongly held; and not until they came to Nesle on the headwaters of the river did they learn that there "was a convenient ford" over which the army could pass. Next day (20th October) the French heralds waited upon Henry to know what were his intentions and to warn him that his path would be barred by armed forces. They were ordered to return to their masters with the message: "if our adversaries attempt to disturb us in our journey, it shall be at their utmost peril." Four days later from the Calais road which ran between the woods of Tramecourt and the little hamlet of Maisoncelles the English saw a great French army drawn up ready to give them battle. All through the night, with the rain falling in torrents, Henry and his captains made their dispositions, and the men trembled when they heard the truculent talk of the 60,000 French in front of them. But as the grey streaks of dawn stole over a lowering sky, the courage which is born of confidence in leadership returned, and the men went quietly to their posts, and waited. Henry himself heard Lauds and Mass: he went forth confident that the God of Battles would not desert him that day. From six to nine the two armies faced each other; and fear returned to the handful of English, for if the French would not fight they must surrender for want of victuals. To challenge his adversaries to battle Henry gave the order for his men slowly to advance; and then the French came forward. As they came nearer, old Sir Thomas Erpyngham, grown grey in the service of Lancaster, stepped out before the ranks, and hurling his warder into the air gave the signal for battle to commence. Volley after volley of arrows poured into the massed ranks of the advancing Frenchmen; but numbers told, and over the dead and dying the French came forward, forcing the English line to recoil "a full spear's length." Their stock of arrows gone the archers seized "axes, poles, swords, and sharp spears" and fell upon the enemy; and an eyewitness related how mounds of dead and dying were piled shoulder-high. Henry himself was in the thick of the fight; once he was so sorely pressed that he had his helm dented, and Davy Gam of Brycheiniog gave his life in protecting him from the maddened onslaught of the eighteen young nobles of France who had sworn to kill him. For three long hours the slaughter was continued. There were hundreds of prisoners, but the news that Brabant was to make a counter-attack compelled Henry to order their execution, and when his men refused to obey that order his own bodyguard of archers shot them down where they stood. The counter-attack failed, and the English remained the masters of the field.

Edward III.'s victory at Crécy pales into insignificance beside Henry's triumph at Agincourt. It is estimated that the French lost 12,000 killed; and there were

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many prisoners. The English losses were staggeringly low: an eyewitness placed then as low as fifteen, but modern research now places them at eighty. There was great rejoicing in England when the news of the victory was told, and when Henry and his men returned to London in November the authorities staged a magnificent pageant in their honour.

Henry was too great a realist to believe that the victory of Agincourt would give him control of France, and he was quickly at work preparing for another descent upon the country. One thought dominated his mind: he must regain "the ancient heritage" of Normandy; and with this end in view he determined to build up a fleet which would ensure the command of the Narrow Seas. Normandy, he knew, was not to be conquered by isolated victories: it was necessary to maintain an army there until the province was completely subjugated; and the fleet's work was to protect his lines of communication with England. Early in August 1417 Henry put his plan into operation, and with a picked force of 16,000 men landed at Touques at the mouth of the Seine.

For two years Henry remained in Normandy. One by one the strongholds of the pro-French nobles were reduced. Caen fell in September 1417; Falaise in January 1418; Domfront in July and Cherbourg in September of the same year.

The siege of Rouen was begun in the summer of 1418, and in the following January the Norman capital was in English hands. Henry could at least claim that he had regained "the ancient heritage." A brave show was made to reorganise the conquered districts on thoroughly sound lines and to put down abuses which had gone unchecked under French rule; but the time was past when the Normans would cheerfully accept as their ruler a king of England; and every conquest called for strong garrisons. The murder of Jean *Sans Peur* of Burgundy on the bridge at Montereau in the Dauphin's presence, and perhaps at his orders, in September 1419 removed the danger of a reconciliation of Armagnacs and Burgundians, and the latter in their eagerness for revenge concluded an alliance with the English invaders. France had reached the nadir of her fortunes.

Early in April 1420 the French king formally accepted the terms dictated by the victorious Henry (Treaty of Troyes). Not only was the English king to marry Catharine of Valois, but he was recognised as Charles VI.'s heir: while his father-in-law lived he was to act as regent; and the united forces of England and France were to be used against "Charles bearing himself for the dauphin of Vienne." The treaty was ratified at Troyes in the following month, and on 2nd June Henry and Catharine were married in the Church of St John in the town.

But Henry's triumph was more apparent than real. South of the Loire the people refused to accept the English king as regent and heir to the throne; and even in the districts nominally under English control strongholds were held for the Dauphin and French nationality. Against them Henry hurled his

forces, and one after another—Sens, Melun, Barbentan—they yielded. On 31st December Henry and Charles VI. made their state entry into Paris. They were joyously received; but the warmth of that reception was due to the fact that the French capital was strongly Burgundian in sympathy, and it was not long before the presence of English soldiery had the effect of drumming into Parisian heads the unpalatable truth of servitude to an alien power. There was no time, however, to revel in the festivities of the French capital. News came that Henry's presence was required in Normandy, and he himself felt that it was his duty to return to England.

His stay in England was cut short by the news that his brother Clarence had been killed at Beaugé in an engagement in which all the honours went to the Dauphinists. The moral effect of this engagement cannot be overestimated: it gave the lie to Henry's boast that God had chosen him and his people as the instruments for punishing the French nation. Three months later (June 1421) Henry was back in France, and his first move was against Dreux, an important Dauphinist stronghold on the west side of Paris. Within a month the place was in his hands; and he then set out to force the Dauphin to give him battle. He lacked the men to lay siege to the Dauphinist headquarters, Orléans; and turning back towards Paris he put his army about Meaux, a stronghold which threatened the English hold on the French capital. From October 1421 to May 1422 siege operations were continued; and while they were in progress Henry learnt that Catharine had been safely delivered of a man child.

The war had played havoc with Henry's health; and during the siege of Meaux he was seriously ill with dysentery. Indomitable courage and strength of will kept him going: he was aware that any sign of weakness on his part would have a depressing effect upon his men who had suffered unspeakable privations in his interests. But by August Henry was too ill to ride his horse, and when his men went forward to attack Cosne he was compelled to accompany them in a litter. It was his wish to proceed to Paris, but the fates were against him, and at Bois de Vincennes "he entered his bed of pain." On 30th August he knew that the end was near, and calling to his side the men who had served him so faithfully during his reign—Bedford, Exeter, Warwick, Robsart and others—he told them "in a firm voice" that he was about to die; and he thanked them for their services, and stated that it had been his intention to "have awarded to each (of his fellow-soldiers) worthy rewards." Agonised with pain he nevertheless made his final dispositions: to his brother Bedford he committed his baby son and the care of his French conquests, and counselled him to keep on good terms with Burgundy; the other brother Humphrey was made responsible for the government in England. When this was done his spiritual advisers drew near to prepare him for his last journey; and with them he recited the "vij psalmes of pennance." When he came to the verse in the

fifty-first Psalm, " O be favourable and gracious unto Sion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem," Henry interrupted his chaplains with a prayer.

> O Good Lord, thou knowest that if thy pleasure had been to have suffered me to live my natural age my firm purpose and intent was, after I had established this realm of France in sure peace, to have gone and visited Jerusalem, and to have re-edified the walls thereof, and to have expulsed from it the miscreants, thine adversaries.

The Viaticum and Extreme Unction were administered; and then the dying king sank back on his bed exhausted. A little after two in the morning of 31st August 1422 Henry passed to his rest, murmuring with his last breath " *in manus tuas, Domine, ipsum terminum redemisti.*" The body was reverently carried to England, and in the following November was laid to rest in Westminster Abbey, between the shrine of St Edward Confessor and the chapel of Our Lady.

HENRY VI. IS perhaps the most tragic character in the drama of English kingship. Only nine months old when his illustrious father died it was inevitable that others should direct the affairs of his kingdom until he was old enough to assume kingly responsibilities, and it was his misfortune when that time came not to possess the qualities essential in a ruler called upon to govern a kingdom torn with internal dissensions. The degenerate Valois stock from which his mother was sprung bestowed upon him the taint of insanity; an intense human feeling made it impossible for him either effectively to deal with factious subjects or to order affairs with a tyrant's unconcern; and a childlike simplicity put him at the mercy of men and women whose vision of the public good was obscured by self-interest and petty jealousy. A mother's love was denied him, for soon after his father's death " the fair Catharine " either secretly married or went to live with Owen Tudur, " a Welsh gentleman," and the wife who was provided for him turned out to be an unscrupulous, scheming woman whose very presence at his side was a bitter reminder of the English failure to hold his father's French conquests. The great barons who should have been the support of the throne plunged the kingdom into civil war, and baronial jealousies were the prelude to a dynastic struggle, during which Henry was deprived of his throne and sent to languish in prison.

Nevertheless, few men have possessed a richer store of virtue than Henry VI. " There was not in the world a more pure, more honest, and more holy creature," wrote the historian Polydore Vergil in the next century. The English bishops were amazed that he should remind them of their spiritual duties: his subjects marvelled that no stronger expletive than " forsooth and forsooth " ever passed his lips. Religion meant everything to Henry. He was attentive at the services of the Church; he visited the holy shrines with great regularity; he chastened his body with fasts and wore a hair shirt beneath his state robes;

he had a peculiar affection for the English saints, secured the canonisation of St Osmund, and pleaded for similar recognition by the Church of Alfred the Great. Nothing was more distasteful to him than ostentation. He himself spurned fine clothes, and wore " square-toed shoes of goat's hide, like a farmer's, a long gown with a round hat, like a citizen's, and plain woollen stockings."

His humility and accessibility endeared Henry to his poorer subjects, and he inherited his father's deep concern for the " under-dog." This may explain his interest in education : perhaps he saw in learning the means of raising men out of the humble stations into which they had been born and of providing them with an opportunity of appreciating the pleasures which are conceived in knowledge. When little more than eleven, Henry took a keen personal interest in the university of Caen, founded in his name by his uncle Bedford ; and his foundation of the school at Eton—" King's College of Our Lady of Eton beside Windsor "—and King's College at Cambridge was a worthy repetition of the experiment so successfully carried out by William of Wykeham at Winchester and Oxford. Poor though he was, Henry somehow contrived to devote a considerable portion of his income to the enrichment of the poorer educational foundations in the land ; and it is no exaggeration to acclaim him as one of the founders of our system of grammar-school education.

While the baby king lay in his cradle there were sown the seeds of the discord which came to such a bloody harvest in the Wars of the Roses. Gloucester claimed the office of regent, but after " great and long deliberation " the Lords, acting incidentally without the Commons, rejected the claim on sound constitutional grounds, and nominated Bedford as " Protector of England," though provision was made that his brother Gloucester should act as deputy when he was away in France. Thus parliament established two important points in constitutional law : first, a king cannot nominate the regent to act during the minority of his successor ; and, second, parliament alone has the right to determine in whom shall reside the executive authority during a regency. Gloucester was naturally resentful of the way in which he had been elbowed out of the regency, but what angered him more was the knowledge that his humiliation had been skilfully engineered by Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester ; and when the Beaufort party in the council, which had been invested with the supreme executive authority, gained the ascendancy it was inevitable that there would be a dangerous clash between the duke and the bishop. By 1425 so bitter was the feeling between them that their followers stood under arms, and Bedford had to hasten back from France to prevent a private war. He composed the quarrel by allowing Beaufort to accept the cardinal's hat which Henry V. had refused to allow him to do, and when the bishop went away on a pilgrimage the political situation was brighter than it had been for some time.

In 1427, however, Gloucester sought to obtain from parliament an enlarge-

ment of his powers; but he was sharply reminded that his position had already been defined; and when Beaufort returned in the following year the old feud was continued with renewed bitterness. The two factions now made the French war the excuse for their rivalries: Gloucester's party advocated a relentless continuance of the struggle to maintain the conquests of Henry V.; Beaufort's urged peace. Unfortunately Gloucester himself endangered the English position in France when in 1423 he married Jacqueline of Hainault without the permission of her feudal superior, Burgundy, who looked forward to the time when her possessions would come into his hands through lack of heirs. Bedford, however, by his wonderful tact managed to placate the irate Burgundy, but his own position was considerably weakened by the rivalries in the council at home, and the activities of the peace party lessened the enthusiasm for the war. The failure to take Orleans in 1428–29, due chiefly to the inspired leadership of Jeanne d'Arc, followed by the defeat of the doughty Talbot at Patay, were disasters which were not redeemed by the capture of Jeanne d'Arc by the Burgundians in 1430; for within a month of the fight at Patay the road to Rheims was cleared of English troops, and along it passed the Dauphin to be crowned Charles VII. in the ancient hallowing place of the kings of France.

Bedford's reply to the coronation was to take the boy Henry to France to be crowned king of that kingdom (April 1430). Henry's life had been strangely ordered, and almost as soon as he could walk he had been made to take part in official functions. In February 1426, for example, he "opened" the parliament which assembled at Leicester, and in the same year his uncle Bedford knighted him. Two years later he was placed in the care of Warwick, who was instructed by the council to "teach him to love, worship, and dread God, draw him to virtue by ways and means convenable, laying before him examples of God's grace to virtuous kings and the contrary fortune of kings of contrary disposition, teach him nurture, literature, language, and other manner of cunning;" and the earl was also empowered, in Henry's name funnily enough, "to chastise him when he doth amiss." On 6th November 1429 the little boy of eight was crowned in Westminster Abbey, and an observer noted how he sat, "beholding the people all about sadly and wisely." Bedford's plans for the French coronation went wrong. The road to Rheims was too dangerously threatened by the French forces of Charles VII. for Henry to be taken along it, and for weeks the boy lingered in Rouen, and there saw Jeanne d'Arc fearlessly facing her English and Burgundian judges. Much to Bedford's disappointment the idea of a coronation at Rheims had to be abandoned, and on 16th December 1430 Henry was crowned King of France in the cathedral church of Notre Dame in Paris by his great-uncle Cardinal Beaufort. It was a sullen crowd which collected to watch the ceremony: the Parisians resented the prominence of the English officials, and were later disgusted by the withholding of the customary gifts and pardons.

After ten days in the French capital Bedford hastened the king back to Rouen, and about the middle of February 1431 he was safely home in London, where the citizens accorded him a rousing welcome.

No praise is too great for the valiant attempt made by Bedford to maintain the English power in France, but after the appearance of Jeanne d'Arc he was fighting a losing battle. Though she had been adjudged by the English to be a witch, and in the market-place at Rouen had been burnt alive, the French soldiery regarded her as a saint, and in the memory of her inspired leadership they regained that confidence which had been lost in the shattering victories of Henry V. The death of Bedford's duchess, Anne of Burgundy, weakened the Anglo-Burgundian alliance, and in 1435 it was terminated at the Congress of Arras. There the French were prepared to sacrifice much to secure peace—Normandy and Guienne—but they insisted that the title of King of France should be given up; and that Bedford was not prepared to do. On 15th September in the same year Bedford died: he was the one man in Henry's service who might have kept a strong hand on the reins of government, and his death removed the last check on the senseless rivalry of Gloucester and Beaufort.

The cardinal could at least claim that he faced facts: England's heart was no longer in the French war, and there was in the country a genuine desire for peace. Behind Beaufort stood William de la Pole Earl of Suffolk; and the peace-loving Henry applauded their efforts to secure peace. But the fall of Paris in 1436 only served to make Gloucester and the war party more insistent upon a vigorous prosecution of the French war, and a prominent member of this faction was Richard Duke of York, who by his marriage in 1438 to Cicely Nevil, Westmorland's daughter, had the backing of the powerful Nevil interests. Between these two parties a ding-dong struggle went on over the French war, and as a result of the divisions within the council there was a complete breakdown of government. Barons maintained in their service bands of armed retainers, who took the law into their own hands and threatened all who dared to call them to account for their lawless depredations; and the strength of these baronial "armies" was so great that their reduction would have involved the kingdom in civil war.

Until 1444, however, the war party more or less had its way; but they could point to no military successes in justification of their policy; and the cost of the war imposed such a heavy financial burden upon the country that the people only thought of peace. At the same time the peace party in the council laboured to secure a settlement of the quarrel between the two kingdoms; and thought that this might most effectively be done by a marriage alliance between Henry and a member of the French king's family. Henry himself, who in 1442 reached his legal majority, favoured the scheme, and Suffolk was sent to open negotiations. Charles VII. was not attracted by the proposal

Unknown Artist.

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that one of his own daughters should be Henry's bride; but he was quite prepared to sanction his marriage to Margaret, the daughter of Duke René of Lorraine, the titular King of Jerusalem and Sicily, who was his wife's brother; and this arrangement was to be accompanied by a two years' truce. Suffolk, however, had let it be understood that the English government would also agree to relinquish their claim to Maine; but this concession was kept a dark secret for the moment; and the reason for the secrecy was the knowledge that Gloucester and York would not only never consent to surrender Maine but would also use Suffolk's promise to the French king to ruin the peace party's influence in the council.

Henry was married to Margaret at Titchfield Abbey on 22nd April 1445. The new queen at once sided with Suffolk, and undoubtedly assisted him to poison Henry's mind against his uncle Gloucester and to keep York from the royal presence. It was imperative that Gloucester and York should be removed before the secret of the Maine surrender leaked out; and in a parliament which assembled at Bury in Suffolk the former was accused of treason and arrested. Five days later he was dead, and although Suffolk's party protested that Gloucester's death was due to natural causes, few people in the country, and certainly none of the members of the war party, believed the tale; and Beaufort's death a few weeks afterwards left Suffolk the undisputed leader of the peace party and master of the political situation. Maine was surrendered in 1448, and as a *quid pro quo* the French Government prolonged the truce for a further two years. York, who had striven valiantly to uphold the English authority in France and was in many ways a worthy successor of Bedford, was recalled; and in order to get him out of the way was sent to Ireland as Lord Deputy.

In March 1449 the English shamefully violated the truce by the seizure of Fougères; and the French, eagerly waiting for an excuse to renew the war, hurled themselves against the English forces in Normandy. Edmund Beaufort Duke of Somerset, was in command of the English forces; but the French easily overcame his feeble efforts at resistance, and by July 1450 Normandy was lost for ever to the English crown. Already there was a fierce outcry in England against Suffolk's administration; and to save him from the popular fury Henry banished him for five years. On his way across the Channel "Jack Napes"—such was Suffolk's nickname—was recognised by some sailors and murdered; and the leadership of the peace party now devolved upon Somerset, whose failure in Normandy was hardly likely to make him acceptable to the majority of the nation.

For Henry 1450 was a most unhappy year. At Whitsun the people of Kent, under the leadership of the mysterious Jack Cade, rose in rebellion; and marching to London they demanded York's recall and the punishment of Suffolk's friends. For some days London was at their mercy, and in the confusion which

prevailed in the capital Henry made himself scarce by going to Kenilworth; and only the news that York had landed at Beaumaris and the promise of an amnesty induced the insurgents to return to their homes. Despite the queen's attempt to waylay York, he reached London in September; and protesting his loyalty to Henry demanded the appointment of a new council on which he himself should have a seat. There was nothing for Henry to do but to accept the situation as it was; but Somerset was bent upon retaining his position, and with the queen's help did his utmost to poison Henry's mind against York. A Yorkist parliament, however, quickly consolidated York's position: he was declared Henry's heir; and Somerset's arrest was ordered. But under the queen's influence Henry created Somerset captain of Calais, and refused to banish him from the court.

A new complexion was now put on the rivalry within the council: York strove to retain his title to the throne; Somerset was equally determined that his rival should never succeed Henry. By a skilful manipulation of the elections the latter was able in 1453 to secure the election of an anti-Yorkist parliament; but Somerset was not yet strong enough to reverse the previous parliamentary recognition of York as heir to the throne. In the summer of 1453 Henry's illness and the defeat of Shrewsbury at Châtillon ruined Somerset's influence in the country. York claimed the regency; but in October the queen gave birth to a son, Edward; and naturally the mother and Somerset now fought for the boy's rights. At the end of March 1454, however, York was appointed Protector until the prince was of age or as long as the king pleased. Somerset was put in prison; and the new government lost no time in taking steps to restore order in the kingdom and to beat off the French attacks on Calais and Jersey. This brief period of vigorous rule was terminated in January 1455, when Henry regained his senses. York's protectorate was cancelled; a new council in which he had no place was chosen; and Somerset was released from prison and restored to favour.

This was the last straw for York. With the aid of his Nevil relations in the north of England he collected an army and marched on London. On 21st May he wrote to Henry to protest his loyalty; but Somerset intercepted the letter; and the king was urged to march against his rebellious subject. Next day at St Albans was fought the first engagement in the Wars of the Roses; and it was a Yorkist victory. Somerset was slain, and Henry himself was slightly wounded. He was nevertheless well treated by the victorious party; and when he consented to the appointment of a Yorkist council the past seemed forgotten. York was appointed Protector again when Henry lost his reason in October; and there is no doubt that he would have been retained as chief counsellor after the king's recovery in February 1456 had not Margaret intervened to secure his dismissal.

Henry's evil genius was this queen upon whom he lavished his love. She was a vindictive woman, and was resolved to break York's power. In the two years following the engagement at St Albans she worked to that end; and by April 1459 was openly collecting armed forces for a renewal of the struggle. Her boast that the great Yorkist lords "should be destroyed utterly" was a challenge which York and his friends dared not ignore. In September the two forces came into conflict at Bloreheath in Staffordshire; and the Yorkists held the field. But a few weeks later the tables were turned on them at Ludlow: York fled to Ireland, the Nevils and York's eldest son Edward to Calais. A parliament, packed with the queen's supporters, thereupon attainted York and his friends of treason.

The queen's action had made reconciliation impossible. In June Richard Nevil, Earl of Warwick, landed at Sandwich; and quickly had Kent at his back. At Northampton on 10th July 1460 he gained a victory over Henry, and took him prisoner: the queen and her son, who were not present at the battle, fled to the Percy country in the north. Henry was well treated by his captors: he was, we are told, "greatly comforted" when Warwick and the other lords in his force protested their loyalty. A parliament was summoned. York claimed the throne; and his claim was submitted to the Lords, Commons, and judges. The Lords shifted their responsibility on to the king's shoulders on the plea that he had "seen and understood divers chronicles;" the judges were not to be drawn; and the Commons said that they were "too simple" to deal with such an important matter. In the end the Lords rejected the claim; but such opposition could not long be maintained when a Yorkist army was at hand; and at last a compromise was reached. Henry was to be allowed to retain the crown during his lifetime, but York was to be Protector and to succeed to the throne on Henry's death. The poor king—"for a man that hath little wit will soon be feared of death"—readily accepted this arrangement.

Naturally the queen, who now had a large army at her disposal in the north, would not acquiesce in the settlement reached in London. York, therefore, marched against her, but at Wakefield on 29th December his army was overthrown and he himself was killed. His son Edward took his place as the leader of the Yorkist party, and on 2nd February 1461 he crushed the Lancastrian party in the Welsh marches at Mortimer's Cross. The queen after Wakefield marched south to release her husband, but her road was barred by Warwick at St Albans, and although the Yorkists were defeated there on 17th February, Warwick retained his hold on London. Henry was overjoyed when he was led into the Lancastrian camp after the battle; and once again he placed himself completely in the power of his wife. On 4th March Edward of York was proclaimed king in London; and on the 29th at Towton he shattered the Lancastrian forces. "Full of sorrow and heaviness," Henry crossed the

border into Scotland with his wife and son: the first part of his reign was ended.

Henry's movements in exile are difficult to trace; but he probably remained in Scotland until June 1464, when the Scots concluded a fifteen years' truce with Edward IV. For a year he was a fugitive in the wild hill country between Lancashire and Yorkshire; but he was finally taken "in Clitheroe Wood" in the company of a monk, a physician, and a servant, and he was conducted to London. Nor can we be certain as to the treatment which he received at his captors' hands. Yorkists maintained that he was treated "with all humanity and reverence;" Lancastrians, on the other hand, averred that he was starved and beaten, clothed in rags and neglected. His patience in adversity won him the respect of friends and foes alike: he told his captors that he would be perfectly happy as long as they allowed him to enjoy the regular services of the Church. Once, when taunted with the fact that he was an usurper, he observed:

> My father was king of England, and peacefully possessed the crown for the whole of his life. His father, my grandfather, was king before him. And I, a boy, crowned almost in my cradle, was accepted as king by the whole realm, and wore the crown for nearly forty years, every lord swearing homage and fealty to me, as they had done to my forefathers.

The crown was again to encircle his brow. On 3rd October 1470 Edward IV. fled to Flanders, and the Lancastrians at once went to the Tower to release Henry. He was "a shadow" of his former self; and when they led him to Westminster he was listless and ill. Edward was back in London in April 1471; and when he came to see Henry the old king greeted him with "Cousin, you are welcome: my life will be safe in your hands." He was taken with the Yorkist army to Barnet, and in the fighting was placed so that he might be struck down; but he came scathless out of the battle, and was taken back to London and placed in the Tower. The defeat of his queen, and the death of his son at Tewkesbury on 4th May, filled him with sadness: he can hardly have known that the last motive for keeping him alive went with his boy's death in that bloody battle. And so "on a Tuesday night, 21 May, betwixt xi and xii of the clock, the Duke of Gloucester being then in the Tower and many others," Henry VI. was done to death.

CHAPTER V

THE YORKISTS

Edward IV.: 1461–1470, 1471–1483
Edward V.: 1483
Richard III.: 1483–1485

BY BATTLE THE Yorkists gained the crown; in battle it was wrested from them. On 4th March 1461 the Londoners thronged to Westminster Hall to hear Edward of York with his own mouth declare his title to the throne. On the previous day a Yorkist council had deposed Henry VI. on the ground that he had violated the parliamentary settlement of the succession laid down after the Yorkist victory at Northampton; and it was agreed that under the same settlement Edward as the heir of Richard of York, slain so lately at Wakefield, was entitled to succeed to the throne. In the first parliament of the reign (November) his position was made doubly sure by the declaration that the Lancastrian monarchs were usurpers and "pretensed kings." It was a parliamentary recognition of the Yorkist theory of indefeasible hereditary right. Edward claimed that his father was descended from Edward III. through both parents: the Lancastrians, on the other hand, were descended through one parent, John of Gaunt, who was younger than Lionel of Clarence from whom Richard of York's mother was descended. It was a useful argument in that it hid the dynastic ambitions of the Yorkists. Edward IV. was crowned on 28th June; and in the coronation honours were dukedoms for his two brothers, George and Richard.[1]

Edward IV. looked every inch a king. We are told that he was "very tall of personage, exceeding the stature of almost all other men, of comely visage, pleasant look, broad-chested;" and his ready wit and easy manners won him the love of his subjects. He was not a great general, but, as Commines observed, "he was of an invincible courage," and he could truthfully boast that he never lost a battle. He loved the good things in life and was "given to bodily lust;" and it was to be his fate that over-indulgence should hasten him to the grave when in the prime of his life. Rich London citizens hid their wives when they

[1] George was created Duke of Clarence: he married Isabella Nevil, daughter of Richard Nevil, Earl of Warwick, *the Kingmaker*. Richard was created Duke of Gloucester: he married Anne Nevil, Isabella's sister, whose first husband was Henry VI.'s son, Edward, slain at Tewkesbury.

heard that Edward was about, and left their poorer neighbours to be cast in the rôle of cuckolds. And as he was indifferent of a woman's honour, so he gave little thought to the needs of his subjects: he fleeced them of their money, debased their coinage, purloined their goods; and he passed into memory as a miserable reprobate who would sell his country's honour for a bag of crowns.

Declared king by parliamentary vote, hallowed in the abbey church at Westminster in the accustomed form, Edward nevertheless sat uneasily on his throne. As long as Henry VI. and his son Edward lived, a section of the community would look to them as their lawful rulers, and they would inevitably attract the sympathy of all with a grievance against his government. The Lancastrian danger was squarely faced: victories at Hedgeley Moor and Hexham pacified the northern districts (1464); and Wales was soon brought under subjection. But for Edward the feeling of insecurity remained: he was conscious of the fact that he owed his exalted position to Warwick and his Nevil connections, and at any moment it might be challenged by them. It was Warwick who won the victory at Northampton, which was the prelude to the Yorkist kingship; he had skilfully secured London when, after the Lancastrian victory at the second battle of St Albans, the capital lay at the mercy of Edward's enemies; he had subjugated Wales; his brother, John Lord Montagu, had pacified the north and for his services was rewarded by Edward with the Percy earldom of Northumberland; his other brother George, elected Archbishop of York in 1464, was the chancellor; his uncles were the Lords Abergavenny, Fauconberg, and Latimer; and the Duke of Norfolk was his cousin. Richer than any other member of the baronage he was consequently able to maintain a splendid private army, and few men enjoyed a greater popularity in the country. Overseas it was bluntly said that Edward ruled England "by virtue of the Earl of Warwick," and for none had the truth of that statement a greater significance than for Edward himself.

He was determined, therefore, to free himself from the toils of the Nevil power. Matters came to a head in 1464. Warwick had strong pro-French sympathies, and advocated a marriage between Edward and Bona of Savoy, the sister-in-law of Louis XI. Negotiations were opened, and it was arranged that Warwick himself should go to France to make the final arrangements; but Edward was compelled to announce that on 1st May he had married secretly the Lady Elizabeth Grey, the widow of Sir John Grey of Grobey, and the daughter of Richard Wydville, Lord Rivers, who had married the Dowager Duchess of Bedford. The great nobles said that the lady was not good enough for him, but their opinion was obviously influenced by her Lancastrian connections and Edward's refusal to marry into their families. Warwick was furiously angry: committed to the French match, he looked upon Edward's

action as a piece of trickery which was bound to make him (Warwick) the laughing-stock of the French court.

But what could Warwick do ? The sense of impotence only served to increase his resentment. Edward went on as though nothing had happened, refusing to take offence at Warwick's displeasure ; but he had already adopted a plan for checking the Nevil influence, and it took the form of making his wife's family the nucleus of a new baronial order. Throughout 1464–5 Wydvilles were married right and left ; and some were advanced to the chief offices of state. Warwick fumed and raged, but the most he could do was to oppose Edward's foreign policy, and attempt to play Clarence off against his brother.

Edward was pro-Burgundian, Warwick pro-French. The king knew that the time was not ripe for him openly to challenge the Nevil influence, and Warwick was therefore allowed to discuss terms with Louis XI. : at the same time Edward kept up a friendly connection with the Burgundians, and in 1467 came to a secret understanding with the Duke Philip's son, Charles Count of Charôlais. Both the king and Warwick played a thoroughly discreditable game. The former made a bold bid for popular support when he announced that it was his intention " to live on my own and not to charge my subjects but in great and urgent causes ; " the latter succeeded in winning over to his side Clarence by suggesting that the duke should marry one of his two daughters and thereby secure one half of the great Nevil fortune. In 1468 Edward betrothed his sister Margaret to Charles *the Bold*, Duke of Burgundy, who was the Charôlais of previous negotiations. Warwick, actively supported by Louis XI., worked feverishly to prevent the match on the ground that the couple were related within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity. Their efforts met with no success, and Margaret and Charles were married in July 1468 : Edward, in the meantime, had declared in parliament that he proposed to invade France so that the restless spirits in the kingdom might waste their energies on a foreign war.

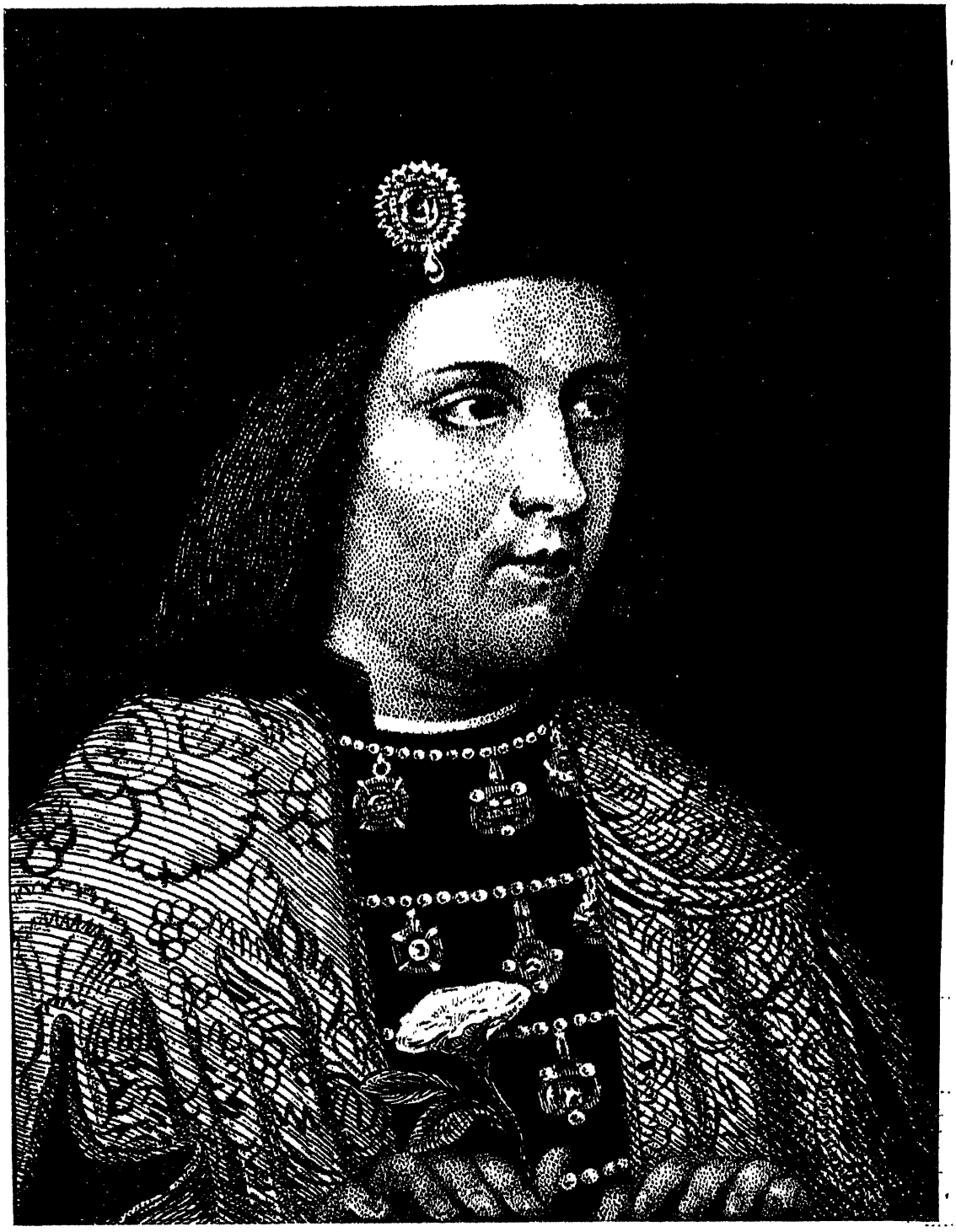
The disturbed state of the kingdom soon put an end to all thoughts of a French war. All over the country there were sporadic outbreaks, and it was generally thought that in some of them the Nevils had a hand. In June 1469 occurred the Robin of Redesdale commotion. The manifestoes issued by the leaders complained of the too great influence of the Wydvilles. There is no doubt that the movement was inspired by Warwick or his friends, although the earl himself was then at Calais ; and when early in July Edward summoned him to assist in the restoration of order, the reply which he received was the news that Clarence had married Isabella Nevil on 11th July. Warwick and his son-in-law came to England, but their intention was not to assist, but rather to thwart Edward. At Edgecote Field on 26th July Pembroke was routed by a north country force, and Edward himself was taken at Olney, near Coventry. The Nevil faction had registered a signal triumph. Edward's father-in-law (Rivers)

and brother-in-law were executed; and he himself was sent as a prisoner first to Warwick castle and then to Middleham. But Warwick found that it was not in his best interests to keep the King a prisoner, the Londoners in particular resenting his action; and by Christmas a reconciliation was effected on the basis of a general pardon.

At the beginning of March 1470 a rebellion flamed up in Lincolnshire: it was avowedly Lancastrian in its sympathies, but as subsequently was proved Warwick and Clarence had skilfully planned it. Edward struck quickly and at "Losecoat Field" crushed the rising: when he learnt how far Warwick and Clarence were involved he summoned them to answer for their conduct; and they replied by fleeing to the north of England to raise forces. He went hard after them, and was everywhere enthusiastically received: Warwick and Clarence knowing that the game was up bolted for France.

Louis XI. at once saw a chance of doing France an invaluable service: if he could reconcile Margaret of Anjou and Warwick they would return to overthrow Edward; and their triumph would end the Anglo-Burgundian alliance. But the task seemed impossible: a terrible sea of blood lay between Margaret and Warwick, and the Lancastrian queen was not likely to forget how the Yorkist earl had consistently given out that the Prince Edward was not Henry VI.'s lawful son. Nevertheless, Louis succeeded in carrying through his plan. The reconciliation was sealed by the marriage of the Prince Edward to Warwick's daughter Anne, and on 13th September Warwick and Clarence landed at Dartmouth to proclaim Henry king. Edward fled to Lynn, and from there took ship to Alkmaar in Holland. Poor Henry VI. was once again king; and with characteristic indifference to the course of the baronial vendetta the people of England hailed the restoration with joy.

Burgundy at first refused to lend Edward assistance: he was disgusted at the way in which he had ignored his repeated warnings about Warwick's preparations for return; and he had no desire to commit himself to a line of action which would jeopardise relations with the *de facto* government in England. But Edward's sister Margaret pleaded his cause; and in the end Burgundy secretly aided the fugitive to recover his kingdom. By March 1471 everything was ready for a start. On the 12th a landing party was put ashore near Cromer; but they returned with the report that the eastern counties were completely under Warwick's control; and sailing up the coast Edward finally disembarked at Ravenspur where Henry IV. had landed nearly seventy-two years before. The invaders received a very half-hearted reception from the people of Yorkshire until Edward, following the precedent of Henry IV., gave out that he had returned merely to claim his dukedom of York; and to lend colour to the claim his men were ordered to display Lancastrian badges and to shout as they marched "King Henry." Slowly Edward moved south: if there was no



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EDWARD IV.

great show of enthusiasm there was also no sign of resistance. Warwick had shut himself up in Coventry, and refused Edward's challenge to come out and fight: nor did the earl consider it expedient to accept the returned king's offer of pardon. Clarence, on the other hand, was easily won over. Edward reached London on 11th April: the following day his men occupied the Tower. His interview with Henry VI. has already been mentioned. Warwick at last bestirred himself to action and marched on London; but at Barnet on the 14th he was opposed by Edward, and in a bloody battle the Yorkist cause again triumphed. Among the dead lay Warwick and his brother Montagu: Edward had rid himself of two of the Nevils. Queen Margaret was at Weymouth the day Barnet was fought; and after raising forces in Devon and Cornwall she marched north to join with the strong Welsh detachment under the command of Jasper Tudur; but on 4th May Edward came up with her army at Tewkesbury; and before the Welsh reinforcements arrived he won a great victory. Either in the fighting or immediately afterwards the Prince Edward was slain; and on the same day as Edward returned to London Henry VI. was done to death. The Yorkist triumph was complete.

Clarence was the thorn in Edward's flesh. The duke was unstable and headstrong; and his unconcealed ambition made him a danger to his own family. When Gloucester proposed to marry Anne Nevil, the Prince Edward's widow and Warwick's daughter, Clarence bitterly opposed the match, because it involved sharing with his brother the Nevil estates. Edward composed the quarrel, and Gloucester married Anne, but the incident rankled with Clarence; and subsequent events obsessed him with the idea that his eldest brother was brutally indifferent to his interests. On the death of his wife there was a proposal, strongly supported by his sister Margaret of Burgundy, that he should marry the Burgundian heiress Mary; but Edward would not allow the match; and the same opposition was shown to the Scotch proposal that he should marry Margaret, the sister of James III. of Scotland. Resentful at this treatment Clarence gave way to an outburst of petulant lawlessness, which culminated in a haughty protest against a death sentence passed on two of his retainers; and probably in the belief that this behaviour was only the prelude to treason Edward ordered his brother's arrest. In the parliament before which Clarence was brought to answer the charges made against him Edward himself conducted the prosecution; and contemporaries were amazed by the bitterness of the proceedings. Clarence was convicted and sentenced to death: his execution was delayed for some days, Edward hoping perhaps that he could spare himself the anguish of having to send a brother to his death; but the Commons were insistent that Clarence must die; and when the time came to carry out the execution it was reported that the duke had been found drowned in a butt of Malmsey wine (1478).

Edward kept the management of the government in his own hands. He was not poor like his Lancastrian predecessors; and therefore seldom had to appeal to parliament for funds. Money could be obtained in other ways: rich subjects were compelled to lend him money, knowing full well that there was little prospect of repayment; there were large profits to be made out of the law; and he was not above engaging in commercial undertakings. Even a French war could be turned to good financial account. In 1472 Edward announced that he proposed to lead an expedition into France; but when it got under way three years later he found that neither his Breton nor Burgundian allies showed much inclination to join with him against the French king; and after a spectacular march during which there was no fighting he was easily persuaded to come to terms with Louis. By the Treaty of Picquigny (29th August 1475) Edward and Louis pledged their country to friendship for a period of seven years; and the latter undertook to pay his English cousin 75,000 crowns down and an annual tribute of 50,000 crowns. In England some said that Edward had shamefully sold his country's honour for a French pension; but ordinary people were grateful to him for having avoided another French war; and the worst that could be said against the arrangement was that it placed Burgundy at the mercy of France, and thereby jeopardised English commercial relations with the Low Countries.

Edward's handling of foreign affairs during the latter part of his reign was lamentably weak. It is true that Gloucester's march into Scotland in the summer of 1482 secured the restoration of Berwick, surrendered by Margaret of Anjou to the Scots as the price of their help against the Yorkists; but this achievement was completely overshadowed by the Franco-Burgundian alliance concluded at Arras in December; and with it came the danger of a new French war. On Charles *the Bold's* death in 1477 his heiress Mary married, contrary to the wishes of Louis XI., Maximilian, the son of the Emperor Frederick III. Mary, however, was thrown from her horse and killed in March 1482; and pressed by the Flemings from whom he obtained his funds Maximilian reluctantly came to an arrangement with the French king whereby it was agreed that the dauphin should marry his and Mary's daughter Margaret. At Picquigny Louis had promised that his eldest son should take one of Edward's daughters as his wife; and his repudiation of that promise, followed by his refusal to continue the money payments agreed upon in the treaty, ate like a canker into Edward's heart. Too late did he realise that he had been outmanœuvred by the wily Louis: no longer could he hold over the French king's head the threat of an alliance with the Burgundians. Nevertheless, he was bent upon taking vengeance upon the faithless Louis; but in the midst of his warlike preparations he was stricken down by an illness brought on by his reckless debaucheries; and on 9th April 1483 he breathed his last.

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EDWARD V.

AS EDWARD IV. and his handful of friends made their way across the eastern counties, fleeing from the wrath of the returned Warwick and his Lancastrian allies in 1470, his queen, heavy with child, sought the protection of the Church; and in the Sanctuary at Westminster on 2nd or 3rd November she was delivered of a son, who without fuss or ceremony was named Edward. On recovering the throne in the following year Edward IV. created the baby Prince of Wales: parliament was promptly asked to recognise him as the heir to the throne, and the Lords swore that he should become king when his father was dead. Foremost among those to take this solemn oath was Gloucester, the baby prince's uncle; and subsequently he was appointed a member of the princely council set up to manage the young Edward's affairs. Honours were showered upon the future king; and every precaution was taken to ensure that his succession would not be challenged.

Edward IV. had reckoned without his brother Gloucester. Within three weeks of Edward V.'s accession this uncle had shown his hand. Swiftly the power of the Wydvilles was broken: they were hated by the old nobility, perhaps because they were cultured and clever; by Gloucester, because they would defend with their lives the young king. Edward was thereupon taken to the Tower, Gloucester all the time protesting that he was honourably lodged there; and his dissimulation was so skilfully done that the country offered no resistance to his nefarious plans. It was at Gloucester's instigation that Archbishop Thomas Bouchier waited upon the queen mother in the Sanctuary at Westminster to persuade her to allow her younger son Richard to go to the Tower to keep the young king company; and when this was done the stage was neatly set for the drama of the wicked uncle's usurpation.

On 22nd June, preaching from the text, "bastard slips shall not take deep root," a certain Dr Shaw at Paul's Cross declared that Edward IV.'s children by Elizabeth Wydville were bastards on the ground that their father in his early youth has been betrothed to Eleanor Talbot, daughter of "the old Earl of Shrewsbury;" and the preacher thereupon went on to say that they "were not rightful inheritors unto the crown, but that the Duke of Gloucester's title was better than theirs." Two days later Henry Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, told the same tale to an assembly of Londoners in the Guildhall; but his words were coldly received; and the only acclamation which greeted them came from supporters drafted into the meeting for that purpose. On the 25th a parliament, which was not representative of the nation, invalidated Edward IV.'s marriage, and voted that the crown should be offered to Gloucester. With feigned reluctance he accepted the honour (26th June): the brief reign of Edward V. was over. Some time during that summer Edward and his brother Richard were murdered, and their bodies were buried at the foot of the staircase in the White Tower.

RICHARD III., UNQUESTIONABLY the murderer of the princes, might be described as one of history's problem kings.[1] Throughout his brother's reign his behaviour was exemplary; he displayed none of Clarence's factiousness; and he consistently worked in Edward IV.'s interests. But the insensate cruelty of his nature early manifested itself. After Barnet, when only in his nineteenth year, he supervised the execution of the captured Lancastrian leaders; and it was popularly believed that his hand had dispatched the young Edward after Tewkesbury, and that he was privy to the killing of Henry VI. a few weeks later. One must remember, however, that he was with a certain party always the *wicked uncle*, and consequently it was politic to father on him crimes of which actually he might have been guiltless; but his seizure of the crown in 1483 from the grasp of a young boy had all the appearances of a deep-laid plot; and his subsequent treatment of the men who had assisted him in the usurpation branded him as a man devoid of gratitude. The explanation of his behaviour may perhaps lie in his physical disability. He was under-sized and deformed; and there is evidence that he bitterly resented the fact that he was not like other men. Yet in battle he was capable of the most reckless bravery and performed prodigious feats of valour; and his military reputation made him respected and feared.

Many in their hatred of the Wydvilles held the view that Richard ought by right to be protector during the minority of his nephew: some even brought themselves to believe that the rule of a grown man was more to be desired than that of a little child, and on the score of expediency they were ready to justify the breaking of the normal rule of succession. But few could honestly condone the methods which Richard employed to achieve his ends. Even before the crown was formally offered to him he had struck down Hastings, who had been a loyal friend and stout ally in the successful attempt to break the Wydville power; and the only explanation of this act is that Richard's true intentions were suspected, and that with the assistance of others Hastings was determined to get the young king out of his uncle's clutches. The accusation of sorcery levelled against the late queen and Joan Shore, Edward IV.'s mistress, was a curious move to make: the two women, so Richard averred, had "by their sorcery and witchcraft" wasted his body; and it does at least appear as though a sense of physical inferiority had become an obsession with him. Joan Shore was a thoroughly disreputable person, but making her walk through London's streets as a punishment for her alleged offence produced an immediate revulsion of feeling in her favour; and it was so inimical to Richard's interests that it confirmed the growing suspicion that the demon of cruelty had taken possession of his soul.

Even Buckingham lost faith in his friend. For a time, it is true, the duke

[1] Recently Mr Philip Lindsay had attempted to absolve Richard of the crime of murdering his nephews. His arguments are skilful but not convincing. See *Richard III.*, Philip Lindsay.

Unknown Artist.

Reproduced by Courtesy of The National Portrait Gallery.

RICHARD III.

appeared as though he also wished to play the usurper; but he was easily persuaded to abandon that rôle and to join in the conspiracy which was on foot to send to Brittany for Henry Tudur, Earl of Richmond, who claimed descent on his mother's side from the Beauforts, the legitimatised bastards of John of Gaunt, and on his father's side from "the fair Catharine of Valois," Henry V.'s queen. Knowing that his friends had turned against him, Richard made the fatal blunder of ordering the death of his two nephews—at least such is the reasonable explanation of their disappearance.

Buckingham's revolt turned out to be a dismal failure. Contrary winds kept Henry Tudur in Brittany; and a flood-swollen Severn prevented Buckingham from leaving South Wales to join his friends in south-west England. Betrayed by one of his own retinue the duke was brought before Richard, and without a semblance of a trial was summarily executed (November 1483); and a compliant parliament attainted at least a hundred of his followers. In January 1484 Richard made a bid for popular support when he sponsored an act of parliament making benevolences illegal; and in the following March he commanded the bishops to repress and punish immorality. But he could not escape the fear that Henry Tudur would one day descend upon the kingdom. It was to prevent him marrying one of the late king's sisters that he induced their mother to leave sanctuary; and the solemn removal of the remains of Henry VI. to Windsor was a subtle attempt to secure Lancastrian support. Nottingham became his headquarters: its central situation would enable him to meet a revolt in any part of the kingdom. There the wretched king learnt that his little son Edward had died at Middleham in Yorkshire from violent pains in his bowels (April); and the news filled him with a grief "almost bordering on madness."

Richard must have known that he was fighting a losing battle. Armed retinues might compel obedience, and outwardly men might go on with their work as though nothing had happened; but there were clear indications that the national conscience was sorely troubled, and that treason seemed the proper salve to apply to it. Richard might order the death of William Collingbourne of Wiltshire; but he could not kill the rhyme which the dead man had made:

> The cat, the rat, and Lovel our dog
> Ruleth all England under a hog.

"The which was meant that Catsby, Ratcliffe, and the Lord Lovel ruled the land under the king, who bare the white boar for his cognizance."

It has been said that Richard never seriously planned to marry his niece Elizabeth, and that the project was the ambition of Edward IV.'s queen. But there were few doubts in the minds of his subjects when they learnt that Elizabeth of York appeared at the Christmas festivities of the court "arrayed like a

second queen," and when a few days later Richard's queen was taken seriously ill it was widely believed that some dark plot was hatching in the king's evil mind; and the popular outcry against the possibility of a marriage which the Church prohibited was so great that he had publicly to deny that it was seriously entertained.

In January 1485 messengers from Brittany brought the news that Henry Tudur planned to invade the kingdom in the coming summer. Richard was determined to resist him with all the forces he could command. Money was his most urgent need: to procure it he blandly ignored the act against benevolences. His agents went round the shires: men were pressed into his service. Richard himself went to Nottingham—and waited; Lovel put to sea to intercept the invader. On 7th or 8th August Henry Tudur landed in Pembrokeshire; and his fellow-countrymen quickly flocked to his side. A fortnight later Richard, mounted on his favourite charger *White Surrey*, marched out of Leicester to meet his rival. But there was treachery in the ranks of his army: the Stanleys and their Lancashire contingent were pledged for the invaders; and Northumberland waited only to see how the matter went. On the morning of 22nd August the two armies came in sight. Richard had twice as many men as Henry Tudur; and to force the Stanleys to fight with him he sent to Sir William Stanley to say that he would kill his son, Lord Strange, unless he put his Lancashire men in posture against the invaders. But Stanley refused to move: orders were therefore given for Strange's execution; but men were too busily engaged in preparing for the battle to carry them out.

Richard fought like a lion that day; and his reckless bravery was a great inspiration to the handful of men who were loyal to his cause. For a moment it seemed as though he must triumph; but when his hopes were brightest the Stanleys decided to march with the other side; and in a short time all was over. "Fighting manfully in the thickest press of his enemies" he was cut down, crying out before death came to him, "Treason! Treason! Treason!" The crown which he had placed on his head when he went into battle was found; and on the blood-drenched field of Bosworth, Henry Tudur was hailed as king. Richard's naked body was thrown over a pack-horse and carried to Leicester for burial. The bloody baronial vendetta of the Wars of the Roses was over.

PART II

DESPOTIC KINGSHIP

(1485–1688)

CHAPTER I

THE ESTABLISHING OF THE DYNASTY

THE DEATH OF Richard III., the end of the Wars of the Roses, coincided with the end of the Middle Ages. The Wars of the Roses are sometimes called the last effort of Feudalism in England, but even this was only a "bastard" kind of Feudalism: of the castle, not of the manor and village. It was a Feudalism become mere partisanship, immersed in the cabals of the Royal Court which was "a hell of intrigue and treachery."

It has been calculated that in Mediæval England there were altogether about fifteen hundred castles. Most of these would be still intact in 1485, and yet their day was past. Designed and having for hundreds of years served as dwellings and fortresses, they were now of little or no use for defence, and were therefore considered inadequate as dwellings. When military exigencies were no longer paramount, people naturally preferred a freer kind of domestic architecture and a more generous "lay-out" of the precincts. So the castle gave way—not at once but gradually—to the country house, and the mailed baron gave way too: "Mowbray and Tankerville: Bolebec and Albemarle: Glanville and Mortimer: Clare and Montgomery—grey stone and gilliflowers—and the soft green velvet of an English lawn." [1] This did not all pass. If behind the casemates and curtain-wall of the castle the English lawn had been made, the art was not lost. The country-house kept the lawn and added the flower-garden. The baronage had been greatly reduced in the wars, though not extinguished. The lay peers in the first year of the reign of Henry VII. were twenty-nine; in the first year of Edward III. they had been eighty-six.

This England of 1485 was a supremely beautiful land, its natural beauties enhanced by glorious buildings. It was not only the castles, picturesque and still intact, which gave additional distinction to the landscape. Beautiful monasteries, more varied in form than the castles, lighter, more graceful, were in every district and corner of the land. The Thames valley, for instance, was one long chain of monasteries from London to Oxford, the most famous of them being at Reading and Abingdon, although now only a few of their stones remain.

In the course of the fifteenth century the townspeople, the *bourgeoisie*, in England as everywhere else in Western Europe, had grown in prosperity and in social and political importance. In the country the manorial system of landowning and cultivation was declining. The "open fields"—not everywhere

[1] Hugh Braun, *The English Castle* (1936), p. 115.

but to a considerable extent—were being enclosed for agriculture or for sheep runs. The labourer was being emancipated or was emancipating himself, and was becoming a "yeoman"—copyholder or freeholder—or perhaps only a farm-servant at wages; or he might go to the towns, where the crafts were busy, wages were good, and there were opportunities for rising to be a master or a merchant. For the Wars of the Roses, these faction-fights of the baronage, had scarcely affected the towns. In this respect England was more fortunate than France, desolated in many places by the ravages of the Hundred Years War. It was to an England not merely unexhausted, but abounding in increasing prosperity and vitality, that Henry VII. succeeded on 22nd August 1485.[1]

Henry VII. was the only son of Edmund Tudur, Earl of Richmond, and the Lady Margaret Beaufort. His paternal grandfather was Owen Tudur, a Welsh knight who married Queen Catherine, the widow of King Henry V. Owen, naturally, was a "Lancastrian" in the Wars of the Roses, and was executed by the Yorkists in the market-place of Hereford in 1461. He said, "That head shall lie on the stock that was wont to lie on Queen Catherine's lap;" then he "put his heart and mind wholly into God, and full meekly took his death." The Lady Margaret, Henry VII.'s mother, was a saintly woman who gave noble educational endowments in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. She was a great-granddaughter of John of Gaunt, third son of Edward III. Henry VII.'s claim to the throne came through his mother and also from right of conquest over Richard III. at Bosworth. He married Elizabeth of York, daughter of King Edward IV., but the marriage did not take place until 1486, after Henry VII. had been crowned and recognised as king by Act of Parliament. He dated his accession, however, neither from the coronation nor from the Act of Parliament, but from the death of Richard III., or from the day before the death of this "usurper."

When he succeeded to the throne Henry Tudur was twenty-eight years old. Francis Bacon, who wrote his life in the early seventeenth century, describes him as "a comely personage, a little above just stature, well and straight limmed, but slender." He was of a serious countenance, reverend, "a little like that of a churchman," Bacon says, and neither strange nor dark, nor yet winning nor pleasing, but just "well-disposed." When he spoke, however, his expression of face became animated, but only then; and so portrait-painters could make very little of him. Although not in the direct line of succession to the throne, he had been noticed by Henry VI., the last Lancastrian king, as one who might wear the crown and end the sanguinary dynastic troubles. "One day when King Henry the Sixth (whose innocence gave him holiness) was washing his hands

[1] The date of the battle of Bosworth and the death of Richard III. Henry himself, however, seems to have dated his reign from the previous day, 21st August; see Harris Nicholas, *The Chronology of History* (1833), pp. 309–313.

at a great feast, and cast his eye upon King Henry, then a youth, he said: "*This is the lad that shall possess quietly that, that we now strive for.*" In fact, this was what happened. After the accession of Henry VII. the land, rather unexpectedly, had quiet for a hundred and fifty years.

It was not absolute quiet, for there were a good many rebellions even in the Tudor period—eight major insurrections in less than a hundred and twenty years. They were all merely local, however, were quickly suppressed, and never became real civil war. Tudor police action was very effective, although there was no standing army and no police force—for the parish constable could hardly be said to amount to a police force. The crown, of course, had for long kept a few permanent men-at-arms, drawing wages, for garrisoning the Tower of London and other royal castles. These men did not amount to a standing army. Henry VII., however, kept all the artillery in the country to himself. No baronial castle could have held out against the king's artillery. Nevertheless it is remarkable that order was kept with so little display of force. The sheriff could call out the freemen of the shire to help preserve order. In Mary's reign the Lord Lieutenant was placed by parliament in charge of the forces of the shire, though there were Lord Lieutenants without parliamentary sanction from 1550. By the famous statute 3 Henry VII. (1487) the Court of Star Chamber was, if not first established, at any rate greatly strengthened, particularly for dealing with highly placed offenders against the law, and for forestalling them before they committed offence. "This court is one of the sagest and noblest institutions of this kingdom," wrote Francis Bacon. "It discerneth also principally four kinds of causes, forces, frauds, crimes various of stellionate, and the inchoations or middle acts towards crime capital or heinous, not actually committed or perpetrated. But that which was principally aimed at by this Act was force, and the two chief supports of force, combination of multitudes, and maintenance or headship of great persons." The court was specially charged to proceed against all persons guilty of unlawful maintenance, of giving of liveries, of retaining, of indenture, of embracery of the king's subjects.[1]

The laws against indentured retainers were enforced. Bacon wrote:

> "There remaineth to this day a report, that the king was on a time entertained by the Earl of Oxford (that was his principal servant, both for war and peace) nobly and sumptuously, at his castle at Heningham. And at the king's going away, the earl's servants stood (in a seemly manner) in their livery coats, with cognisances, ranged on both sides, and made the king a lane. The king called the Earl unto him and said: 'My Lord, I have heard much of your hospitality, but I see it is greater than the speech. These handsome gentlemen and yeomen, which I see on both sides of me, are sure your menial servants.' The Earl smiled and said: 'It may please

[1] Stellionate is fraud. Maintenance is unlawful support of a person in a lawsuit. Embracery is the employment of influence with a jury: this is also alluded to, in the statute, as champerty.

your grace, that were not for mine ease. They are most of them my retainers, that are come to do me service at such a time as this, and chiefly to see your grace.' The King started a little and said: 'By my faith (my lord) I thank you for your good chear, but I may not endure to have my laws broken in my sight. *My attorney must speak with you.*' And it is part of the report that the Earl compounded for fifteen thousand marks." [1]

The courts, however, could not do everything. Henry had still to fight for his throne after Bosworth. In 1486 Lord Lovel, a Yorkist, raised rebellion unsuccessfully in Yorkshire, and then fled to Flanders (Duchy of Burgundy), of which the Dowager-Duchess, Margaret, was sister of the late Yorkist king, Edward IV. Next year Lord Lovel was back in Ireland with money and men from Flanders. Assisted by John Earl of Lincoln, one of three brothers, the last scions of the great administrative house of de la Pole, he sailed to England, but was defeated by Henry VII. in person at Stoke, "a large myle oute of Newarke," 16th June 1487. The leaders of the rebel army were killed, "all making good the fight without any ground given," except that Lord Lovel is said to have escaped from the rout, to have made his way to his house, Minster Lovell near Burford in Oxfordshire, and to have starved to death there. Among the prisoners taken at Stoke was Lambert Simnel, a personable youth whom a clever Yorkist priest had tricked out as Edward Plantagenet, Earl of Warwick, son of the late Duke of Clarence and therefore alleged nephew of Edward IV. King Henry, with magnanimity (though Bacon says that it was also policy) astonishing in those sanguinary times, spared the boy, giving him an occupation suitable to his birth, in the royal kitchens. Lambert had been taken over to Ireland before the rebellion and had been "crowned" in Dublin. Now "he turned a broach that had worn a crown." Evidently the boy's head had not been turned and he performed his menial duties well. Afterwards he was promoted to be one of the king's falconers. "As to the priest, he was committed close prisoner, and heard of no more; the king loving to seal up his own dangers."

The next pretender was a different sort of person from the modest Simnel. The fifteenth century in England was both a litigious and a fraudulent age. Lambert Simnel was one Yorkist fraud. Perkin Warbeck of Tournai was another. He struck some conspirators as having some of the airs of royalty. The Duchess Margaret accepted him as her nephew, the murdered Richard of York. He must have had a considerable amount of gracefulness as well as assurance, for he carried it off as a prince at Margaret's court at Bruges, at the court of Charles VIII. of France, at the court of James IV. of Scotland, where he married a kinswoman of the king, Catherine Gordon, daughter of the Earl of Huntley. His first effort against Henry VII. was in 1491, when he went to Ireland, where the Yorkists were strong. In 1495 he landed in Kent, but the

[1] The mark was 13s. 4d. The fine must have been equivalent to about £100,000 in money of to-day.

invasion was a fiasco. He escaped to Ireland and then to Scotland: it was at this time that he obtained his Scottish bride. In 1497 there was a rebellion in Cornwall caused by discontent against taxation. The Cornishmen advanced as far as Blackheath, where King Henry met and overthrew them, without great slaughter on either side. As was his invariable habit the king issued letters of pardon to those (with the exception of the leaders) who had levied war upon him, provided they expressed willingness to be received into his favour.

Warbeck was not mixed up in this Cornish rebellion which occurred in June 1497, but he took advantage of it to come down from Scotland. He landed on 7th September at St Ives, proclaimed himself king, and was joined by about ten thousand Cornishmen. They marched to Exeter and assaulted the North Gate and South Gate. Failing here, Warbeck took his army, which a London chronicle says consisted of poor, naked men, to Taunton; and there he left them, fleeing in the night towards the south coast. He must have heard that King Henry was on the way to meet him with thirty thousand men. Henry entered Wells on 30th September, about a week after Warbeck had fled from Taunton. Finding himself cut off from the sea, Warbeck found sanctuary in the Cistercian Abbey of Beaulieu. His wife, Lady Catherine, whom he had left at St Michael's Mount, was brought to the king. Henry sent her to live with the queen, and gave her a pension for the rest of her life. Perkin himself was safe enough in the Abbey of Beaulieu. Henry, surely one of the most merciful of kings, made no difficulty about giving him a pardon; and Warbeck made a full confession of his career: "I was born in the Towne of Turney, and my ffader's name is John Osbek. And my moder's name is Kateryn de faro." He had learned English in service with an English merchant at Middleburgh in Flushing. He related the circumstances of the Yorkist conspiracy in which he had been caught up. The king placed Warbeck in prison in the Tower of London where there was a genuine Yorkist prince, Edward Earl of Warwick, whom Lambert Simnel had impersonated. It was apparently easy confinement, because the London chronicle calls it being in the king's court at liberty. Anyhow, it was easy enough for Warbeck to effect an escape in 1498 along with the Earl of Warwick. They were captured. They were arraigned before a court at Westminster and sentenced to beheading. King Henry judged that there was now no scope for clemency. The sentences were carried into effect (November 1499). For the rest of his reign King Henry was untroubled by conspiracy and rebellion. He had an excellent secret service of "flies and familiars," both at home and abroad; they became so efficient that, Bacon writes, "the fame and suspicion of them kept (no doubt) many conspiracies from being attempted."

CHAPTER II

THE "NEW MONARCHY"

THE PHRASE "NEW MONARCHY" was coined by that brilliant historian and maker of phrases and haunting sentences, John Richard Green. It is the Monarchy which, with sure hand, took over the direction of England after the Wars of the Roses.

"There are few periods in our annals," writes Green, "from which we turn with such weariness and disgust as from the Wars of the Roses. Their savage battles, their ruthless executions, their shameless treasons, seem all the more terrible from the pure selfishness for which men fought, the utter want of all nobleness and chivalry in the struggle itself, of all great result in its close." Green notes, however, that the Burgundian chronicler, Philip de Commines, considered the English civil wars to be very remarkable. The English partisans did not destroy each others' towns and buildings, nor massacre the commoners: "The mischief of the war falls on those who make the war."

The turbulent baronage destroyed itself while the rest of the people looked on. "The general tranquillity of the country at large, while the baronage was dashing itself to pieces in battle after battle, was shown by the remarkable fact that justice remained wholly undisturbed. The judges rode on circuit as of old. The system of jury-trial took more and more its modern form." If, in this passage, Green somewhat exaggerated the law-abiding nature of the people during the Wars of the Roses, he is right when he goes on to say that the destruction of the baronage left the field clear for something like royal despotism. The Crown towered into solitary grandeur. "The old English kingship, limited by the forces of feudalism or of the religious sanctions wielded by the priesthood or by the progress of constitutional freedom, faded suddenly away, and in its place we see, all-absorbing and unrestrained, the despotism of the New Monarchy." This process towards despotism was not peculiar to England. It was going on in Spain, Italy, France. Scott, in the opening chapter of *Quentin Durward,* describes the rise, for causes very similar to those of England, of the New Monarchy of France in the person of Louis XI.

Green says that the Yorkist Edward IV. was the creator of the New Monarchy in England. Doubtless many of the marks of the New Monarchy can be discerned in the reign of this king; but his system was transitory. He could not secure the throne to his family. His death was followed by conspiracy, murder, usurpation, and civil war. It was obviously Henry VII. who established

Tudor England, Tudor kingship—that is, the New Monarchy in being for over a hundred years. And throughout those hundred years the Tudor monarchs kept parliament in being too, so that the English people did not lose the taste or habit of liberty. The condition of affairs was otherwise in France. The French parliament ("Estates-General") just managed to struggle through the bottle-neck of the sixteenth century, but it stopped at the year 1614.

The English parliament emerged from the sixteenth century with unabated vigour, and in the seventeenth century, after the death of the last Tudor, became supreme in the Constitution.

Lord Macaulay, reflective and eloquent Whig historian, has some admirable remarks on Tudor Government, in the *History* and in the *Essays*. In the *History* he writes:

> The Government of Henry the Seventh, of his son, and of his grandchildren was, on the whole, more arbitrary than that of the Plantagenets. Personal character may in some degree explain the difference; for courage and force of will were common to all the men and women of the House of Tudor. They exercised their power over a period of a hundred and twenty years, always with vigour, often with violence, sometimes with cruelty. They, in imitation of the dynasty which had preceded them, occasionally invaded the rights of the subject; occasionally exacted taxes under the name of loans and gifts, and occasionally dispensed with penal statutes; nay, though they never presumed to erect any permanent law by their own authority, they occasionally took upon themselves, when Parliament was not sitting, to meet temporary exigencies by temporary edicts. It was, however, impossible for the Tudors to carry oppression beyond a certain point; for they had no armed force, and they were surrounded by an armed people. Their palace was guarded by a few domestics whom the array of a single shire, or of a single ward of London, could with ease have overpowered.

In the *Essays* (on "Burleigh and his Times"), Macaulay writes:

> It has been said that the Tudors were as absolute as the Cæsars. Never was parallel so unfortunate. The government of the Tudors was the direct opposite to the government of Augustus and his successors. The Cæsars ruled despotically, by means of a great standing army, under the decent forms of a republican constitution.... Our Tudors on the other hand, under the titles and forms of monarchial supremacy, were essentially popular magistrates.

Notwithstanding all their pride, the Tudors depended, and there is evidence that they even took pleasure in depending, on the goodwill of their individualist subjects. When a rebellion occurred, as happened fairly often, they simply called upon their people to help them, paying them wages for the period of service. This was how Henry VII. met the Cornish rebels at Blackheath in 1497. "My father was a yeoman," Bishop Latimer of Worcester declared in a sermon before Edward VI. "He was able, and did find the king a harness, with himself and his horse, while he came to the place that he should receive

the king's wages. I can remember that I buckled his harness when he went into Blackheath field."

The list of Parliaments held by Henry VII. is not impressive, but it is not negligible. It is reprinted here from Pollard's *Reign of Henry VII. from Contemporary Sources.*

1st Parliament met Nov. 7, 1485, adjourned Dec. 10. Reassembled Jan. 23, 1486, dissolved Feb.
2nd Parliament met Nov. 9, 1487, dissolved before Christmas.
3rd Parliament met Jan. 13, 1489, adjourned Feb. 23. Reassembled Oct. 14, adjourned Dec. 4. Reassembled Jan. 25, 1490, dissolved Feb. 27.
4th Parliament met Oct. 17, 1491, prorogued Dec. 4. Reassembled Jan. 26, 1492, dissolved March 5.
5th Parliament met Oct. 14, 1495.
6th Parliament met Jan. 16, 1497, dissolved March 13.
7th Parliament met Jan. 25, 1504.

It will be noticed that there was an interval of more than seven years between the summoning of the sixth and the seventh parliaments; and in the last five years of his reign there was no parliament at all, and some people might have judged that parliaments had gone for good. Nevertheless, in the reign of the next king who was temperamentally more despotic than Henry VII., parliament functioned steadily and with increasing influence as the reign went on.

CHAPTER III

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

EVERY KING NEEDED to have a foreign policy in those days. It was not so in the Middle Ages. Mediæval monarchs found, on their accession, that their conduct towards other monarchies was already determined for them by tradition, by heredity, by marriage, by succession, by the church. They had, of course, to make decisions; but their tendency was to take the condition of affairs as they found it, and to go on in the old way, without considering whether there were not a better way. Only thus can the blind persistence of the English in the Hundred Years War (which was really a Four Hundred Years War) be explained. There was no foreign policy, or if there was one, it was a policy of tradition. Henry VII. had a policy of "interest." He directed his conduct towards other monarchs and states (like the Hansa towns) according as he thought best for the public weal; and he seems to have been little, if at all, influenced by his personal likes or dislikes. His foreign policy was passionless, and so differed from the conduct of kings of the Middle Ages when everybody was passionate and everything was decided under stress of what the Dutch historian Huizinga has called "the violent tenor of life." Henry VII. considered himself to be, and secured a place as, one of a consortium of European monarchs.

The tradition of the Hundred Years War had been abandoned by Edward IV. (who had some conception of this modern idea of a foreign policy of "interest") when he made the Treaty of Picquigny with France in 1475. Henry VII. had no illusions about war. He was a great maker of treaties, and his usual preface to them was: "That when Christ came into the world peace was sung; and when he went out of the world, peace was bequeathed." Yet he knew, Francis Bacon says, that "the way to peace was not to seem to be desirous to avoid wars." And, in fact, he made a couple of expeditions into France, and went personally on one of them. The first, in 1489, was sent to support the last practically independent "great fief" of France, the Duchy of Brittany, where Henry had once found welcome in his exile before he made his successful descent upon England and to Bosworth field. Brittany now looked like being absorbed by the French monarchy. The expedition which Henry sent in 1489 was a failure; and the Duchess Anne married Charles VIII., King of France. In 1492, however, Henry VII., in alliance with the Emperor Maximilian I. (who, however, did not leave Flanders), and with King Ferdinand of Spain, invaded France through Calais and laid siege to Boulogne. While the siege was in progress,

the king heard that Maximilian could not join him and that Ferdinand, who was fighting on the Franco-Spanish border, had made peace with Charles VIII. and had received (or, rather, recovered) therefor the provinces of Roussillon and Cerdagne. Upon these " airs of peace," King Henry too decided that he would be willing to receive overtures. He could have taken Boulogne by assault, though at the cost of his men's lives. He was big enough to forgo this triumph, and instead, he made the Treaty of Etaples with the French king who renounced the cause of all pretenders to Henry's throne and engaged to pay not only the expenses of the invasion (£186,250), but also an annual pension of 25,000 crowns or £5000. Henry VII. drew this pension for the rest of his life and even Henry VIII. enjoyed it for some years. The wise Henry VII. also secured by the Treaty of Etaples freedom of commerce, of navigation and of travel for his subjects in regard to France (in terms of reciprocity), subject only to the established local regulations. The invasion of France in 1489 and 1492 was King Henry's only foreign war, except that he had to meet a futile Scottish invasion, in favour of Perkin Warbeck, in 1496. His big work in foreign affairs was done by negotiating.

The first treaty of this, England's earliest and greatest diplomatist, was Medina del Campo, concluded 27th March 1489. It made an alliance between the crowns of England and Spain, the two monarchs promising to support each other in any war; to grant liberty to trade and to travel on the part of their subjects in each others' dominions; and to strengthen the alliance by marriage of Prince Arthur of England and Princess Katherine of Spain. Arthur was eighteen years old, but Katherine was only three years: so a good deal could happen before the marriage could take place.

The next treaty was Etaples, 3rd November 1492.

The third treaty was the Intercursus Magnus with Burgundy-Flanders. As long as the Dowager Duchess of Burgundy was supporting Perkin Warbeck, Henry VII., naturally, stopped the supply of English wool to Flemish merchants. By 1496, however, the Archduke Philip of Burgundy, grandson of Charles the Bold, was governing the country for himself. He acceded to the demands of the merchants, entered into negotiations with Henry VII., and concluded a treaty so satisfactory to the Flemings, that they called it The Great Intercourse. Flanders had to renounce the support of English rebels; but freedom to trade and to travel was re-established between the Flemish and English. When the English merchants returned to Antwerp, " they were received with procession and great joy."

The fourth of the great treaties (there were a number of less importance) was concluded with King James IV. of Scotland, after prolonged negotiations undertaken principally through Richard Fox, Bishop of Winchester. It is dated at Westminster, 24th January 1502, and it united " the Thistle and the Rose," James IV. and Margaret Tudur, daughter of Henry VII. Some of the

Unknown Artist.

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The National Portrait Gallery.

HENRY VII.

king's council advised him of the risk, in case his two sons should die (and life was terribly uncertain in that Age) that England might fall by inheritance to the King of Scotland. Henry tranquilly replied: "That if this should be, Scotland would be but an accession to England, and not England to Scotland, for that the greater would draw the less." The union of the two Crowns took place on the extinction of King Henry's line in 1603.

The last great treaty, dated at Greenwich, 30th April 1506, was a commercial convention with the Flemish which, however, they relished less than the Intercursus Magnus of 1496. They called the treaty the Intercursus Malus. The story went about that King Henry had taken advantage of the Archduke Philip's being driven by a storm into an English port to conclude an unfavourable bargain: a ridiculous story, as the princes of Flanders and England were in friendship with each other and their interests closely connected through the Archduke Philip's father-in-law King Ferdinand of Spain. The Treaty of Greenwich really only confirmed and developed the Great Intercourse of 1496, preventing arbitrary increases of customs duties and so ensuring the freedom of trade which was in the interest of both countries.

The wise king was alive to the opportunities that were opening before the modern world. Bartholomew, the brother of Christopher Columbus, was on his way to England to arrange for an overseas expedition when he was captured by pirates and so delayed in his arrival. Only thus, says Bacon, was Henry VII. forestalled by the King of Spain, who at last was induced to support Christopher Columbus in the voyage over the Atlantic in 1492. In 1497, however, Henry VII. gave a charter to John Cabot to explore and take possession of land across the ocean. The expedition of John Cabot and his son Sebastian, sailing from Bristol in April 1497, discovered Newfoundland. But nothing more came of this enterprise at that time.

CHAPTER IV

THE ACHIEVEMENT OF HENRY VII.

FRANCIS BACON ASSERTED that King Henry was "the best law-giver to this nation, after King Edward the First."

> For his laws (who so marks them well) are deep, not vulgar; not made upon the spur of a particular occasion for the present, but out of providence for the future, to make the estate of his people still more happy: after the manner of the Legislators in ancient and heroical times.

One of his best laws, though made partly at any rate to serve a particular occasion, was the *De Facto Statute* (1495). It enacted that: "No person attending upon the king and sovereign lord of this land for the time being, and doing him true and faithful service, shall be convicted of high treason . . . nor suffer any forfeiture or punishment." This act robbed changes of dynasty, which had been rather frequent lately, of their terror, and made for stability of the existing throne. It has never been repealed and has often been invoked by loyal citizens, for instance at the time of the Revolution of 1688.

Another important Act was the Statute of Fines (1489). This, too, had an immediate aim, to put a stop to the incessant and disturbing bringing of suits in the courts for the recovery of land. The Wars of the Roses had, naturally, left titles to landed property in many cases doubtful or contested. The Statute of Fines established a definite and brief term of prescription, enacting that a fine levied with proclamations in a court of law should after five years bar all claims upon land. The Act also had a result which influenced the whole course of English social and economic history: it completed the process by which entail could be broken and so it helped to extend the market for landed property. In the reign of Edward IV. the courts had decided, by the case of Taltarum, that a tenant in tail might, by means of a fictitious process of law, divest all those who were to come after him of their succession, and so become owner of the fee simple. Now any tenant who had broken entail by this process (called a "common recovery") could assure himself against action at law on the part of interested persons by making use of the Statute of Fines. In a country such as England, where the expanding wool trade was providing increasing opportunities for the investment of capital, the importance of a market in free, unentailed land was immense.

The population of England in the reign of Henry VII. was about three

million and was increasing. Owing, however, to the enclosing of pasture or "open fields" for sheep runs, land of yeomen tended to be diminished. King Henry and others who gave thought to the social condition of the country at this time (and there were a good many such people) were disturbed at this. Yet he would not forbid enclosure, for that were to prevent "the improvement of the patrimony of the kingdom." "Nor would he make tillage compulsory, for that were to strive with nature and utility." So, through parliament it was enacted that all "houses of husbandry" which had twenty acres or more attached to them, should be maintained as such, that is as farms, not necessarily with all their existing amount of land but with a "competent proportion" of it (1489). This Act did not fulfil its purpose, as may be inferred from the innumerable laments against enclosures in the next hundred years, for instance in More's *Utopia* (1515) or in the sermon of Bishop Latimer (already quoted in regard to Blackheath) delivered before Edward VI. in 1549.

There was a military purpose behind the anti-enclosure policy of the king's government because it was believed that enclosure and big estates produced "much people but few soldiers." And there was a naval purpose behind Henry VII's. Navigation Act (1485) that wines from Gascony should be carried in English bottoms; thus, writes Bacon, he reversed the ancient policy of free ships, free goods, which had for its end cheapness, "not looking to the point of state concerning the naval power." It is doubtful whether the navy required this restrictive mercantile policy.

The most famous statute of the reign is probably Poynings' Act, more properly called the Statute of Drogheda, 1494. Sir Edward Poynings was the Lord Deputy under whom Ireland ceased to be a nest of Yorkist conspirators. In the session of the Irish parliament held at Drogheda in 1494 it was enacted that no future parliament could be held in Ireland, nor could bills be introduced, without the consent of the crown and council of England. This statute, passed with the immediate object of preventing a rebellious Lord Deputy from calling parliament and from putting through bills detrimental to the crown, became a means for shackling the Irish legislature in the future; and it succeeded in so doing until repealed in 1782.

The great king died "in perfect memory, and in a most blessed mind, in a great calm, of a consuming sickness," at the palace of Richmond on 22nd April 1509. Although he could be firm as steel on occasion, his policy and character were merciful; and shortly before his death he granted a general amnesty. He was a great almsgiver in secret, and also, like his predecessors Henry VI. and Edward IV., a great builder. He built the palace at Richmond, and completed St George's Chapel, Windsor, begun by Edward IV., and built the most magnificent and graceful example of Late Perpendicular architecture in England, the chapel of Henry VII. at Westminster, where he was buried.

Bishop Stubbs, in his *Lectures on Modern History*, says that he selected the reign of Henry VII. for one of his statutory discourses (as Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford he was compelled to deliver a stated number of lectures) because it was a dull subject; and he wished to shift the responsibility for dullness from his lecture to its subject. Bishop Creighton, in his brief *Life of Wolsey*, declares that Wolsey found England a third-rate power and made it a first-rate one: a judgment that seems to read too much of the politics of the Age of Nationalism into the early sixteenth century. If, however, such a transition can be discerned from third-rate to first, it had already been made by the end of the reign of Henry VII. There were certainly many modern trends in Henry VII.'s policy; he established the English crown in the new comity of Western European monarchs.

His chief fault, says Bacon, was that he meddled too much with *meum* and *tuum*. Ever prudent, he believed that the king's government should have a substantial reserve fund; and in the course of his reign he accumulated a reserve of £1,800,000. He left the task of exacting money from rich citizens to his officials, Archbishop Cardinal Morton, Empson, Dudley; but he was not above looking into financial details himself. Bacon says that he had seen an account-book of Empson's which the king had signed on almost every page, and had annotated on the margins. One entry of Empson's was:

> Item, received of such a one, five marks, for the pardon to be procured; and if the pardon do not pass, the money to be repaid; except the party be in some other ways satisfied.

Over against this memorandum was written (in the king's hand): *Otherwise satisfied.*

The king was affable and well and fair spoken; studious, rather than learned. He read "most books of any worth in the French tongue." He understood Latin. No prince was ever more assiduous at his affairs. As for those jousts, tourneys, balls, and masques, which took up so much of the time of princes of the Renaissance, "he was rather a princely and gentle spectator, than seemed much to be delighted with them."

Rudyard Kipling, an understanding interpreter of English history, liked to think of Henry VII. as a builder of ships:

> God speed the *Mary of the Tower*, the *Sovereign*, and *Grace Dieu*,
> The *Sweepstakes* and the *Mary Fortune*, and the *Henry of Bristol* too!
> All tall ships that sail on the sea, or in our harbours stand,
> That they may keep measure with Harry our King and peace in England!

CHAPTER V

KING AND CARDINAL

"THE DIFFICULTY OF maintaining hereditary states accustomed to a reigning family is far less than in new monarchies; for it is sufficient not to transgress ancestral usages, and to adapt oneself to unforeseen circumstances; in this way such a prince, if of ordinary assiduity, will always be able to maintain his position, unless some very exceptional and excessive force deprives him of it."

These are the opening words to the chapter on hereditary monarchies in Machiavelli's *Prince*. Now Henry VIII., though only the second Tudor on the throne, had all the security of hereditary monarchy; this was the achievement of Henry VII. In another chapter Machiavelli writes: "One who wishes to obtain the reputation of liberality among men, must not omit every kind of sumptuous display, and to such an extent that a prince of this character will consume by such means all his resources, and will be at last compelled, if he wishes to maintain his name for liberality among men, to impose heavy taxes on his people, become extortionate and do everything possible to obtain money." The young Henry VIII. when he came to the throne in 1509 was in the first stage of this course, pursued by all Renaissance monarchs: he was going to dissipate his resources (the £1,800,000 left by his father did not last long) in "sumptuous display." The later, "extortionate" part of the course was a long way ahead.

One more quotation may be allowed from Machiavelli, this sagacious, though anything but idealist, mentor of Renaissance princes. "Pope Julius II.," writes Machiavelli, "acted impetuously in everything he did, and found the times and conditions so in conformity with that mode of procedure, that he always obtained a good result." Julius II.'s pontificate was in the years 1503 to 1513. Henry VIII. was like this contemporary Pope in that he acted in all things impetuously, and was always lucky: times and circumstances favoured him.

Henry was born at Greenwich Palace on 28th June 1491. He had a brother, Arthur, five years older than himself, who married Princess Katherine of Aragon in 1501 and died in 1502. Like all Renaissance princes, he was highly educated. Henry VII.'s court was frequented by scholars. The poet Skelton, a clerk in Holy Orders but merciless critic and satirist of the clergy, was Prince Henry's chief tutor. Henry was very precocious. The profound but modest scholar

Erasmus of Rotterdam, visiting Lord Mountjoy at Greenwich in 1499, was taken by Thomas More to meet Henry, a boy of nine years old, described by Erasmus then as a boy of royal demeanour and singular courtesy. The visitors were given dinner, during which a note from Prince Henry was delivered to Erasmus, challenging the scholar to write something. Erasmus three days later sent a courtly poem in Latin. The acquaintance was renewed when the prince grew to manhood. Erasmus, one of the great letter-writers of the world, came to know and admire Henry VIII., through their correspondence and through conversation.

The young king, on his accession at the age of eighteen, was a very attractive sovereign. He was a little above middling height, graceful, athletic, with well-formed limbs, auburn-haired, fair skin; his throat was rather thick; his face round and handsome. He was then clean-shaven. Ten years later the Venetian ambassador Guistiniani in a dispatch first quoted by Brewer, *Reign of Henry VIII.* and now justly celebrated, wrote about the king to his government: "Nature could not have done more for him. He is much handsomer than any other sovereign in Christendom; a great deal handsomer than the King of France (Francis I.); very fair and his whole frame admirably proportioned. On hearing that Francis I. wore a beard, he allowed his own to grow, and as it is reddish, he has now a beard that looks like gold. He is very accomplished, a good musician, a capital horseman, a fine jouster, speaks French, Latin, and Spanish." His passion for outdoor sports, his skill and tirelessness in pursuing them, recalled Prince Hal, the brilliant Henry V. Guistiniani continues about Henry VIII.: "He is very fond of hunting, and never takes his diversion without tiring eight or ten horses which he causes to be stationed beforehand along the line of country he means to take, and when one is tired he mounts another, and before he gets home they are all exhausted. He is extremely fond of tennis, at which game it is the prettiest thing in the world to see him play, his fair skin glowing through a shirt of the finest texture." This, of course, was court tennis, the game of kings and princes, played in a long, covered court with a heavy ball and racket, and requiring dexterity, speed, and endurance. It had been introduced from France into England in the latter half of the fourteenth century. Henry was an extremely cultured, graceful, dashing prince. His court was like that of any Renaissance prince, except that it was better regulated. Princes and nobles in fine clothes, beautiful ladies, artists, scholars, musicians were always there, but noticeably free from the worldly atmosphere of an Italian court. Henry was strictly regular in his religious duties; and though grand priests, dignitaries of the Church, did not haunt his court as they did the French, it had a religious basis. The king himself was a keen student of theology. Lord Herbert of Cherbury, in his *Life of Henry VIII.* (1649), says that Henry had originally been destined for the priesthood and episcopate by his father; at

any rate he had been given a " clerkly " education. He took particular pleasure in conversation with the unworldly, scholarly Thomas More ; so much so, that More, who had a delightful family and house at Chelsea, felt that the king's company was making him almost a stranger at home.

Henry VIII. was still a bachelor when he came to the throne. Six years earlier, in 1503, the year after the death of his elder brother, Henry, at this time eleven years old, had been betrothed to Katherine, his brother's widow, aged seventeen. A dispensation for marriage between brother-in-law and sister-in-law was obtained from Pope Julius II. in 1504. Nevertheless the marriage-scheme languished. Katherine remained in England, but negotiations were undertaken from time to time with other sovereigns for the marriage of one of their daughters to the Prince of Wales. When he succeeded to the throne a final decision could scarcely be delayed longer. The marriage of Henry VIII. and Katherine was celebrated at Greenwich by Archbishop Warham (the same who twenty years later had to try to handle the king's divorce affair) on 24th June, 1509.

The reign for the first year or two was not only popular but quiet and uneventful. Feasting, hunting, archery, tennis, masks, revels, and music occupied the time of the king and all the court. The business of state was prudently conducted by the capable ministers left by King Henry VII. of whom the chief at this time was Richard Fox, Bishop of Winchester. A bad sign of the young king's character was the execution of Empson and Dudley, thrown to the wolves on an unwarranted charge of high treason. The real reason for their execution (1510) was to satisfy the hate of people from whom money, even though they could well afford it, had been somewhat sternly and also subtly extracted. King Henry was of the same mind as Machiavelli (though *The Prince* was not written until 1513 nor published until 1532) : " A prince must not mind incurring the charge of cruelty for the purpose of keeping his subjects united and faithful." He knew too, or believed, with Machiavelli, that : " One ought both to be feared and loved, but as it is difficult for the two to go together, it is much safer to be feared than loved, if one of the two has to be wanting." In the first half of his reign, Henry VIII. was able to accomplish both these things. In the latter half, he concentrated on the first.

Every Renaissance prince had to have a war, as this was a kind of glorified tournament, with more excitement and greater prizes than the home-tourney, and with just enough risk to make it thrilling and honourable. The risk was not excessive, for war was fought with strictly limited professional forces and according to well-understood and well-kept rules. The armies fought for position and for prisoners, especially noble prisoners, who were handsomely treated and heavily ransomed. The prizes of war were, however, far more than even a king's ransom : they were kingdoms. Thomas More, unworldy though he was,

nevertheless was too shrewd to state in his book (*Utopia*, 1516) how the King of England made war, so he confined his remarks to the King of France, and of course no Englishmen would object or even notice that the cap fitted them :

> Suppose I were with the French king, and there sitting in his council, whiles in that most secret consultation, the king himself there being present in his own person, they beat their brains and search the very bottoms of their wits to discuss by what craft and means this king may still keep Milan, and draw to him again fugitive Naples, and then how to conquer the Venetians, and how to bring under his jurisdiction all Italy, then how to win the dominion of Flanders, Brabant, and of all Burgundy: with divers other lands whose kingdoms he hath long ago in mind and purpose invaded.

Henry VIII. wanted warlike adventure and also to win back Guienne and Gascony, the old English provinces of France. He saw, as he thought, his opportunity in the Italian wars which had been going on intermittently since 1494. In that year Charles VIII., the ugly spindle-legged King of France, had invaded Italy and conquered Naples. On the return journey, however, he conquered Milan, after beating the Milanese and Venetians at Fornovo (1495). He then returned to France. In 1498 he hit his head against the lintel of a door in his château of Amboise and died. His successor, Louis, Duc d'Orleans, Louis XII., renewed the Italian war in 1499. By this time Milan and Naples had been lost but he reconquered them. In 1511, however, the warrior Pope, Julius II., formed a Holy League—the Papacy, Spain, Venice—to drive the French from Italy. Henry VIII. joined the League, though he did not send troops to Italy. The French defeated the League there (battle of Ravenna, 11th April 1512), but they lost the Italian possessions to the King of Spain, Ferdinand, father-in-law of Henry VIII.

Parliament voted money, and a force of 10,000 men was collected and sent to Guipuscoa in northern Spain, on the frontier of Guienne (June 1512). There it wasted away, securing the flank of a Spanish army which conquered a good slice of Navarre for the King of Spain. The English troops crossed into Guienne at Bayonne and then left for home. In the following year a fine fleet of king's ships—some built for the navy, some purchased from merchants—sailed with about 4500 soldiers from Plymouth and attacked the French fleet in the harbour of Brest. The English admiral, Sir Edward Howard, a fine sailor and dauntless man, was killed on the deck of the French admiral's ship which he had boarded. Surrounded by French soldiers he had waved his hand to the men on his own ship, took his whistle from his neck and threw it into the sea, before he was stabbed and pushed overboard by the French pikes. The fleet returned to Plymouth (April 1513).

After this the king himself took an army abroad, 50,000 men it is said. This expedition, the best " found " that England had ever sent overseas, must have cost all that was left not only of the parliamentary grant, but of the treasure

of Henry VII. The army passed through the English possession, Calais, and just outside it besieged Thérouanne. A French force came up to relieve the town and was scattered in a running fight called Guinegate or the Battle of the Spurs (16th August 1513). Pierre du Terrail Bayard, the *preux chevalier* of French chivalry was captured and freed without ransom. The town of Thérouanne was captured too. Next, Henry VIII. captured Tournay, which had been the home of Perkin Warbeck. After this he returned to England in a blaze of glory. His luck held good all through the campaign. While he was away, his brother-in-law, James IV. had invaded England; the regent Queen Katherine collected a powerful force and sent it up to the border. The Scots army, king and all, was wiped out at the battle of Flodden, 7th September 1513. Henry VIII., though not yet officially styled Defender of the Faith, was considered to have made good the position of Champion of the Church, by winning all these battles, "the unconquered king, for the Holy See." At this point, however, Henry stopped the war, influenced doubtless by the wise Richard Fox (who had gone to France with him) and by the rising statesman, Thomas Wolsey.

This man was one of the wonders of this wonderful Age of the Renaissance. Born of well-to-do middle-class parents, son of a wool merchant, he was an undergraduate of Oxford at eleven, a Bachelor of Arts at fifteen, a Fellow of his college, Magdalen, bursar, master of the Magdalen grammar-school at twenty-three. As bursar of the college he was in charge of the building of the beautiful Magdalen Tower. In 1500, being in Holy Orders, he took charge of the college living of Limington in Somerset, but he was too active and too ambitious, too fond of business and also of pleasure, in fact altogether too worldly, for the life of a country parson. In 1501 he became a chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Henry Deane. In 1503 he was chaplain to Sir Richard Nanfan, Governor of Calais. In 1507 he became a royal chaplain. It was among the clerks of the Chapel Royal that the king expected to find able men for his administrative service. Henry VII. employed him on diplomatic missions. When Henry VIII. went to war with France in 1512, Wolsey undertook the duties of a Secretary-at-War. He had a supreme talent for business, was amazingly industrious, and took the burden of affairs off the king's shoulders. He was paid handsomely, with clerical livings, parishes, prebendal stalls, to which he gave scant attention. His large income enabled him to live like a great nobleman. Upon the king his influence was not good. "So fast," writes his gentleman-usher and biographer, Cavendish, "as the other councillors advised the king to leave his pleasure and to attend to the affairs of the realm, so busily did the almoner persuade him to the contrary." King's "almoner" was one of Wolsey's many offices. After Henry VIII.'s successful French campaign of 1513, Wolsey was made Bishop of the captured city of Tournay. He held the bishopric until the city was restored to the French in 1518, when he accepted a pension from the King of France instead.

The king, having won battles and cities in 1513, was ready to go on with the French war in 1514, but found that his allies, the Pope Leo X. and Ferdinand of Spain, were now all for peace, and in fact had made peace without asking him. King Henry was furious, but Wolsey was ready at once with bland advice, a plan, and an offer to do all the work himself. He carried through negotiations for an alliance with Louis XII., the enemy against whom Henry had been fighting. Louis XII., a widower, married Henry's sister Mary (October 1514). Henry gave up the dream of regaining Guienne. Now at last, the evil tradition of the Hundred Years War was definitely broken; actually, Wolsey was only returning to the policy of "interest" inaugurated by Henry VII. at the Peace of Etaples. Wolsey was rewarded by being made Archbishop of York. The French peace endured for some years, though the marriage only lasted three months. Louis XII., who was fifty-two, danced so hard with his seventeen-year-old queen that he killed himself, dying on 1st January 1515. He was succeeded by his nephew, Francis, Duke of Angoulême, a prince of the type of Henry VIII., magnificent, athletic, cultured, fond of pleasure, rather heartless. He at once renewed the war in Italy against Spain, the Pope, the Swiss, and won Milan by the great victory of Marignano, 14th September 1515. Next year Ferdinand of Spain died. He was succeeded in Spain and the Spanish Empire by his grandson Charles V.

Wolsey, who became chancellor of England and a cardinal in 1515, was now the greatest subject, living in wealth and spendour unparalleled in England. He spent little time in his archdiocese, but he was assiduous in London at the king's business in which, as the Venetian ambassador truly reported, he was indefatigable. He kept five hundred gentlemen and yeomen, clerks and laymen, in his household. The tapestries on the walls of the many chambers of his great house were changed every week. He entertained like a king. Yet he transacted more business, said Giustiniani, than all the public offices of Venice put together. He kept a court of requests in his house, in which he dispensed justice to poor people; and he made the poor men's lawyers plead for nothing.

Clearly all was not ambition in Wolsey's soul. He had a conception of the public good as well. His court of requests was a boon to poor people. And in foreign policy he achieved one great—though only temporary—boon for Europe. On 2nd October 1518 he succeeded in negotiating a "Universal Peace." Richard Fox, Bishop of Winchester, who had been superseded by Wolsey as the chief councillor and administrator of the king, wrote generously that "it was the best deed ever done for England." The parties to this "perpetual and universal" peace were the rulers of Europe who had been at war, more or less, over a period of twenty-four years—since the invasion of Italy by Charles VIII. in 1494. They not only made peace, but they entered into an arbitration agreement for solving future quarrels. Alas, the peace only endured for three years. The

ambition of three young monarchs ruined it. For on 12th January 1519 the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I. died. Charles V. of Spain, eighteen years old; Francis I., twenty-four years old; Henry VIII., twenty-seven years old, were candidates for the Imperial crown. Mr. Fisher in his *History of England* in the reign of the first two Tudors, writes: "This election marks the beginning of a long struggle between France and the Empire for the hegemony of Europe, a struggle in which the two contending powers were so equally balanced that there was little danger of a decisive issue." Ruinous for the continent of Europe the struggle affected England very little, for the foreign policy of the country tended for nearly two hundred years to be insular and maritime. The election at Frankfurt, which took place on 28th June 1519 was unanimous; it resulted in Charles V. becoming Emperor.

As long as Wolsey was in power in England, the insular and maritime policy which Henry VIII.—except in his most ambitious moods—seemed instinctively to favour had little chance of being tried. Wolsey was all for taking a part in the great European game, where kings and queens made the big "moves," and where the pawns, after all, were only soldiers who served voluntarily for wages. Wolsey preferred to play by means of diplomacy; but he was not averse from using war. It is often said that he aimed at maintaining a balance of power on the Continent; but there is little evidence to support this view. He wanted to be made Pope; and as Charles V. seemed to control the Papacy, Wolsey was generally on Charles V.'s side.

The Cardinal's activity was unceasing. He arranged royal visits. In May 1520 the Emperor Charles V. paid a visit to Henry VIII. at Canterbury; and in June of the same year Henry met Francis between the English town of Guisnes and the French town of Ardres, and for twenty days jousted and feasted on the *Champ du Drap d'Or*, the Field of the Cloth of Gold. On 5th July Henry crossed to Flanders and again met Charles V. at Gravelines. Next summer Francis and the Emperor were at war; and England was on the side of the Emperor, who was lord of Germany, Spain, Flanders, Naples, the Indies. So much for the "balance" theory about Wolsey's foreign policy. It was in this year that King Henry wrote his *Assertio Septem Sacramentorum*, to confute Luther's tract on the Babylonish Captivity of the Church. For this he received from Pope Leo X. the title, still borne by the Kings of England, *Fidei Defensor*. In 1522 an English army was sent into France under the Earl of Surrey. "So began one of the most purposeless and injurious contests in which this country has ever been engaged, a war waged to the accompaniment of solemn religious pretexts, while the Turks were overflowing the plains of Hungary and beating down the heroic resistance of the Christian defenders of Rhodes."[1] In 1523 a member of the House of Commons, called Thomas

[1] Fisher, *History of England*, p. 240.

Cromwell, made a bold, sensible speech against the war, which he said was simply exhausting England's wealth and losing her foreign markets. No harm came to Cromwell for this; in fact, in 1524 the Cardinal took this bold, capable man into his service. The war dragged on quite fruitlessly for England until, on 25th February 1525, the Imperial army routed the French army outside Pavia and captured King Francis I.

For King Henry and Wolsey the defeat of the French in Italy was an opportunity, not to restore the balance of power by joining France, but to invade France again and to annex Guienne. But the words of Thomas Cromwell had come true. There was no more money to be raised in the country. And Charles V., who was himself bankrupt, could do nothing unless England should supply money. Then, when he saw that continuance of the war against Francis was practically impossible, Wolsey induced Henry to offer peace to France. The French were ready to pay heavily for this. Peace was concluded, and even an alliance, at the price of 2,000,000 crowns (£400,000) indemnity paid by France in instalments. The Emperor kept Francis prisoner until March 1526, and then released him on terms which Francis, absolved from his oath by the Pope, did not fulfil. In that year the Emperor's army took Rome, sacked it, and made the Pope practically a prisoner; and two years later, 1529, Wolsey fell from power and died.

CHAPTER VI

THE BREACH WITH ROME

THE CAUSE OF the fall of the Cardinal was the King's Affair, the Divorce Question of 1529, which put an end to England's activity on the Continent—without any diminution of her reputation or prosperity, but rather with a considerable increase.

The king had been not unhappily married to Katherine for twenty years. It is true that before he married her, scruples had been made about his consanguinity with Katherine, and there had been great hesitation in completing the marriage. Katherine was a dignified, pious lady, not without energy when occasion required it, as when the Scots invaded England during her regency in 1513. A daugher, the Princess Mary, was born in 1516. None of the other children of the marriage lived more than a few weeks; Froude gives a list of them in a note to the *History of England*.[1] So in 1527 the king, through his Chancellor Wolsey, was applying to Pope Clement VII. for a divorce, so that he might marry again and have a male heir. The Pope was in the power of the Emperor; and Henry was now in a league with France, bound to aid in driving the Emperor out of Italy. From this complex of circumstances came the break between England and Rome, and the expulsion of papal jurisdiction from England, and also the spreading of Reformation principles in the country. The Protestant Froude, in his *History of England*, boldly faces this fact and is not ashamed of it:

> "It was no accident which connected a suit for divorce with the Reformation of religion. The ecclesiastical jurisdiction was upon its trial, and the future relations of Church and State depended upon the Pope's conduct in a matter which no technical skill was required to decide, but only the moral virtues of probity and courage. The time had been when the clergy had feared only to be unjust, and when the functions of judges might safely be entrusted to them. The small iniquities of the consistory courts had shaken the popular faith in the continued operation of such a fear; and the experience of an Alexander VI., a Julius II., and a Leo X. had induced a suspicion that even in the highest quarters justice had ceased to be much considered. It remained for Clement VII. to disabuse men of their alarms, or by confirming them to forfeit for ever the supremacy of his order in England." [2]

According to Froude, then, the moral basis of the connection between the Divorce Question and the breach with Rome is this: That justice could not

[1] Edition 1870; vol. i. p. 119, note 1.

[2] *History of England*, i. pp. 137–38.

be obtained in the supreme court of the Catholic Church. That the king's motive in asking for a divorce was qualms about the validity of his marriage, and desire for a male heir, seems the only inference to be drawn from the pertinacity with which he pressed for the divorce, against tremendous obstacles, over a period of more than five years. Professor Pollard's view is that this cannot be accounted for by a passion for Anne Boleyn, who, without a divorce, could have been the king's mistress.[1] The divorce proceedings began in March 1527 (the capture of Rome and the Pope by the Imperial troops was 6th May). The first letter written by Henry VIII. to Anne Boleyn is assigned by editors to the month of July of this year, but as it is not dated, it cannot be accepted as evidence. That Queen Katherine comes out of the whole affair with more dignity than either the king or Anne is unquestionable. "If Henry's motives were not so entirely bad as they have often been represented, neither they nor Anne Boleyn's can stand a moment's comparison with the unsullied purity of Katherine's life or the lofty courage with which she defended the cause she believed to be right."

Wolsey proposed that King Henry should marry Renée, daughter of the late King Louis XII. of France, but Henry would have none of this. He was determined to marry Anne Boleyn. In 1528 Pope Clement VII. issued a commission giving Wolsey legatine authority, along with another cardinal sent from Rome for the purpose, called Campeggio (non-resident Bishop of Salisbury), to hear and settle the divorce suit; but after the case had been opened in London, the Pope recalled the suit to Rome (July 1529) on appeal from Queen Katherine. The Spanish party at the Papal Court had triumphed. Wolsey saw now that he was ruined, and with him the Pope's power in England was ruined too. On 9th August 1529 writs were sent out, on the king's orders, for the election of parliament, which had not met since 1523. On 16th October Wolsey was compelled to surrender the seals of his Chancellorship. In his place, Sir Thomas More became chancellor.

The brief remainder of the cardinal's life was a pathetic effort to discharge the clerical duties which he had neglected in his time of greatness. He had never taken the trouble even to be installed in his See of York. In 1530 he spent six months there—kind, gentle, diligent, a model of what a bishop should be. On 4th November 1530, while he was living at Scrooby Castle, he was served with notice of arrest for high treason. He set forth on his last journey, and died on the way, at Leicester Abbey, on 29th November 1530, aged fifty-five, an old man before his time. His gentleman-usher Cavendish reports him as saying to the king's officer who had custody of him: "If I had served God as diligently as I have done the king, He would not have given me over in my grey hairs." From this time King Henry was his own master. He had capable ministers;

[1] A. F. Pollard, *Henry VIII.* (1934), p. 187.

but King Henry ruled alone. He was still comparatively young, at thirty-nine years old, and in his full strength.

Parliament, later known as the "Reformation Parliament," met on 3rd November 1529. From this moment the "King's Affair" developed rapidly towards a final settlement. There is no doubt that the Church in England was unpopular at this time. "Nearly all the people here hate the priests," Chapuys, the ambassador of Charles V., reported on 13th December 1529. Froude is an unfriendly critic of the Church, but his documentary evidence is quite sound; anyone who cares to do so can read the sickening Latin and English documents quoted in the footnotes to pages 195–200 (Volume I) of his *History of England*. The English priesthood was in a low moral condition. The House of Commons was led by Thomas Cromwell, member of parliament for Taunton. Cromwell had boldly stood up for his patron Wolsey when a Bill of Attainder against the Cardinal was sent down from the Lords to the Commons and was rejected. Nevertheless he was now becoming distinctly the king's man. He had roamed abroad, among other places to Rome, and was probably in private a Protestant. While abroad he is believed to have read or become acquainted with the contents of Machiavelli's *Prince*, which circulated in manuscript before it was published in 1532. Machiavelli died at Florence in 1527. Had he lived to see Cromwell as minister he would certainly have discerned in the Englishman the ideal "secretary of a prince," much nearer the Machiavellian ideal than the unknown Messer Antonio da Venafro, who is held up to admiration in chapter 22 of *Il Principe*.

The breach with Rome was not undertaken suddenly, but in definite stages. Parliament began by reducing the unpopular clerical fees for marriage, burial, and such services. It increased the control of the crown over clerical courts (1531). It forbade appeals to Rome (1533). It stopped the payment of Annates to Rome, and followed this act up by abolishing papal authority in England (1534). In the same year it passed the Act of Supremacy, declaring the king to be the Supreme Head of the Church of England.

In January 1533, "somewhere about Saint Paul's day," according to the statement of Cranmer, who was not present, King Henry was married to Anne Boleyn. In the same year Thomas Cranmer, appointed Archbishop of Canterbury (30th March) on the death of Warham, held a court in the Convent of Dunstable to consider King Henry's case. Queen Katherine, who was at Ampthill, was cited to appear, but refused to come and plead. On 10th April the court declared the "pretended marriage" of the King with Katherine null and void from the beginning. On 7th September (1533) a daughter (to be called Elizabeth) was born to Henry VIII. and Queen Anne. The Pope declared Henry excommunicate, and Henry withdrew his ambassador from Rome. The breach was complete. Katherine of Aragon died at Kimbolton in 1536, and was buried at Peterborough Abbey.

CHAPTER VII

THE PROGRESS OF THE REFORMATION

THE BREACH WITH Rome was not in itself sufficient to bring about the Reformation in England. Reform was a gradual process. It began before the breach with Rome, for there were Wycliffites, Lollards, quietly at work all through the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. The period in which the breach with Rome was accomplished, 1529–35, could not help being a period in which Lutheran ideas spread in England, favoured by the anti-Roman and anti-clerical tendencies of the time. The period after the breach with Rome, down to the death of the king, 1535–47, was one both of Reform and Reaction. Finally, the brief reign of Edward VI. saw Reform triumphant. The Marian reaction had little effect. Queen Elizabeth completed the Reformation settlement.

Naturally opinions vary regarding the methods of that period of the age of the Reformation in England which may be called the " Henrician period." Froude writes in the preface to his *History* : " My own impression about it was, that the Reformation was both a good thing in itself and that in England it had been accomplished with peculiar skill and success." Mr Fisher picks out the period of the ascendancy of Thomas Cromwell as repulsive : " We now enter a period which is happily unique in the annals of England, a period of terror. It lasts from 1534 to 1540 and is conterminous with the ascendancy of Thomas Cromwell in the councils of the king." Indeed, the system went on after the fall of Cromwell, nearly down to the death of the king : " In these ten grim, unlovely years, the Reformation was unalterably riveted upon the English people." [1] In general, the people did not object to the Reformation ; on the whole, they welcomed it. It is impossible to say how much of the great change was due to the king, the reformers, the people : all these, in their own way, actively promoted the Reformation.

The first grim act of the grim period was the execution in 1535 of five clergy (three Carthusian monks, a Bridgettine monk, and a secular priest) after conviction of treason for refusing to take the oath of succession to the throne prescribed under the Act of Supremacy. They were hanged at Tyburn. Subsequently in the same year the saintly John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, and the most companionable and " humanist " of English Renaissance scholars, Thomas More, were convicted likewise for refusal to take the oath. They were beheaded on

[1] Fisher, *History of England*, p. 328.

Tower Hill before crowds of people. Fisher was the only bishop who refused to take the oath.

Henry VIII. was now quite immovable. The curious psychological effect of unlimited power was working on him; it always makes a man feel that he is absolutely right, and all who disagree with him wrong. Whether he succeeds or fails makes no difference. He always believes that he is right, even if the rest of the world think him wrong. In any case, however, Henry VIII. was uniformly lucky. His reign was successful. Dangers that looked like crushing him passed away. The plans which he initiated he brought to success.

In 1535 Cromwell, who had been appointed Vicar-General for the king, the Supreme Head of the Church, carried out, partly in his own person, but largely through agents, a visitation of all the monasteries. It is not known whether the idea of the visitation was Cromwell's or Henry's, nor indeed what was the original object. According to the questions asked of the monasteries and the commands given to them, the object appears simply to have been to inspect and reform. In 1536 the "Reformation Parliament," the same (except for by-elections) as had met in 1529, heard in its final session the reports of the visitations, imputing heinous crimes against the monasteries, and was worked up into a fury against them. A bill was introduced for the dissolution of all monasteries which had less than £200 yearly. Nevertheless the bill looked like sticking in the House of Commons until (it is reputed) King Henry summoned the Commons to him and told them to pass the bill or it would cost some of them their heads. The House of Lords, in spite of the fact that bishops and certain abbots sat there, passed the bill; 376 houses with total revenue of £32,000 were dissolved. The confiscated property, vested in the crown, was partly used for the advancement of education, partly for building forts or ships, partly was sold to gentry. In the same year, 1536, Katherine of Aragon, who was rather popular in the country, died, to the intense joy of King Henry and Queen Anne. Henry exclaimed: "God be praised!" He feared either war from the Emperor (Katherine's nephew) or a rebellion at home. Anne's joy, however, did not last long. In May (1536) she was tried before a court of peers and convicted of adultery. A confession from an alleged lover was obtained after torture. Queen Anne went bravely, indeed it seemed gladly, to her doom, which indeed must have been relief from the sickening association with Henry. Cranmer's archiepiscopal court declared the marriage of Henry and Anne invalid. Accordingly the Princess Elizabeth, already regarded as illegitimate by the Catholics, would have to be regarded as illegitimate by the Protestants. The offence for which Anne was convicted was one that Henry himself was now continually committing. His strange mania for marriage now made him take one of his mistresses as queen; she was Jane Seymour, aged twenty-five, the daughter of a Wiltshire squire. The marriage was celebrated

ten days after the execution of Anne. The last affair of this busy year was the issue under royal authority of Ten Articles (adopted by Convocation) and of instructions to the Clergy. The Ten Articles affirmed Transubstantiation, but in other respects inclined a little towards Protestantism. The Instructions of 1536 enjoined among other things that a Bible, in Latin and English, should be placed in every parish church. The version authorised was a combination of Tyndale's and Coverdale's translations. The religious settlement did not meet with universal acceptance, for there was a rising, called the Pilgrimage of Grace (October 1536), chiefly in Yorkshire, where 53 monasteries had been dissolved, and Lincolnshire where 37 had been dissolved. The rising was scarcely a rebellion, for it was certainly not aimed against the king nor any of the institutions of the country, but it was a demonstration in favour of the old religion, as well as a protest against enclosures and such social ills. The rising was put down with great harshness, the king simply disregarding promises of clemency made when the danger was at its height.

On 12th October 1537 a son was born to Henry VIII. and Jane Seymour, but the queen died twelve days afterwards. For just over two years the king was unmarried, although he seriously thought of a union either with an Imperial or French princess, for he was a little alarmed by a Ten Years' Truce concluded between those perpetual antagonists, Charles V. and Francis I. at Nice, June 1538. There was some danger of the two monarchs combining against him: this was what Pope Paul III. was energetically urging. He was advised to allow a French princess to be selected for him. "By God," he said, "I trust no one but myself."

In spite of threatened union between Charles V. and Francis I., the reign went on safely. In 1538 injunctions were issued under royal authority to the church that the Lord's Prayer, Creed, and Ten Commandments were to be recited in English every Sunday; this practically established an English service. Nevertheless, the king was inflexible in his orthodoxy and himself showed enormous industry examining and judging cases of heresy. In 1539 a very subservient parliament passed an "Act abolishing Diversity of Opinions," otherwise called the Act of Six Articles or the Whip with Six Strings. It made denial of Transubstantiation punishable by burning at the stake. The other five Articles enjoined celibacy of the clergy, communion for laity with bread only, confession, binding monastic vows, private masses; the punishment for denying any of these Articles was, for the first offence, imprisonment, for the second, death. The same parliament which passed this Act, passed another dissolving all the remaining monasteries—those with over £200 a year. Their total revenue was about £108,000. Most of these bigger monasteries—the great exception was St Albans—were well conducted.

Fear of combination of Charles V. and Francis I. and of invasion caused

King Henry at last to let Cromwell choose a wife for him—Anne, daughter of Duke William of Cleves, a Protestant, and likely to be a useful ally in the lower Rhineland. The marriage took place on 6th January 1540. The danger of invasion passed away. King Henry, who liked young women, had from the first shown great distaste for his new bride, who was thirty-five years old, though he must have known this before he married her. Cromwell had made the marriage and now suffered for it. He was arrested by the captain of the king's guard on 10th June 1540. Condemned for treason by parliament on a Bill of Attainder, he was executed at Tyburn on 29th July. The marriage of King Henry to Queen Anne of Cleves had been dissolved by act of parliament, 1540 (12th July), on the ground of want of "hearty consent," and on 8th August Henry married Catherine Howard, twenty-one years old, niece of the Duke of Norfolk. The Duke of Norfolk was orthodox; Catherine was orthodox; the marriage—if that was needed, for "heretics" were being burned—showed that a kind of Catholic (though not "Papal") reaction was in force. Anne of Cleves complaisantly remained at Richmond Palace with a very good pension —£3000 a year. She died in 1557. It is to the credit both of her and of Henry that they remained on friendly relations with each other.

King Henry was still only forty-nine years old, but he was prematurely ageing. His will-power, however, was as strong as ever. He ruled his court and his nobles with a rod of iron. In 1539 parliament had passed the "Statute of Proclamations" giving the king's orders in council (with considerable limitations, however) the force of law. The death of Cromwell seemed to make the king only more powerful than ever. In July 1542 his fifth queen, Catherine Howard, was condemned by Bill of Attainder for infidelity and was executed. In 1543, 12th June, Henry married Catherine Parr, widow of Lord Latimer. She was aged thirty-two. A good woman, tactful, sympathetic, kind, she at last brought some order and decency into Henry's court.

And now King Henry, with his religious troubles and his marriage troubles behind him, began to think of territorial grandeur again, as he had done in the early years of his reign. He proposed a perpetual peace and an alliance with James V. of Scotland, his first cousin. Instead of promoting peace the negotiations ended in war. A Scottish army of 18,000 men invaded Cumberland, but King Henry's luck held good. Sir Thomas Wharton, warden of the Western marches, completely routed the Scots at Solway Moss, 24th November 1542. The news of the defeat killed James V., who died on 14th December, just after hearing that his queen had borne him a daughter.

The irrepressible King Henry at once proposed to the Scottish regency that his son Edward (six years old) should be betrothed to the infant Scottish princess; thus at last, and quite simply, England and Scotland would be united. The Scots assented to this proposal, by the Treaty of Greenwich,

1st July 1543: on the marriage of the prince and princess the Scottish and English crowns were to be united. But this Treaty was the work of an "English" party in Scotland—a party, too, which was not staunchly orthodox. A reaction was brought about by the fierce, uncompromising Cardinal Beaton, and the Treaty of Greenwich was torn up. Henry's excellent plan, if completed, would have saved the pains and tragedies of the next fifty years in Scotland and, indeed, would have altered the whole course of seventeenth-century history: there would have been no House of Stuart on the English throne.

The Scottish reaction against the Treaty of Greenwich naturally involved war with England; it also brought about a war between England and Scotland's old ally, France. The last years of the reign found King Henry, as in his early years, allied with Spain (the Emperor Charles V.), invading France in co-operation with a Spanish army coming out of Flanders. Again Henry's luck held good. He went to France himself with the army and captured Boulogne (14th September 1544). The alliance with Charles V. then came to an end. For Pope Paul III., who naturally hated the idea of an alliance between the orthodox Charles and the schismatic Henry, managed to bring about peace between Charles and Francis I. and so to heal—for a time—the political wound of Western Europe (Peace of Crespy, 18th September 1544). The Pope's object was to unite Charles and Francis against the increasing religious trouble, for the Lutherans were making headway in Germany. The Peace of Crespy was designed to be the first step towards the restoration of religious unity, or at any rate towards restoring the power of the Roman Catholic Church. The second step was the summoning of a General Council of the Church, which met in 1545. The Council of Trent met, but did not finish its labours until 1563.

King Henry recked little what the Pope did, or Charles V. either. He had Boulogne; he expected soon to have Scotland or rather to have the marriage-contract of his son with the infant Mary. His design for a union was sensible enough, but his method was too atrocious for words. The method was simply massacre and destruction. He sent an army by sea to Scotland, to Leith, in 1544, with instructions to the commander (Earl of Hertford) to destroy Edinburgh, lay waste the surrounding country, and to put to the sword all who resisted—this meant, of course, the ordinary civilian population. The instructions are reproduced in John Hill Burton's *History of Scotland*.[1] The horrible plan was put into effect (May 1544). The English army failed to capture the Castle of Edinburgh, but they set fire in the city, at that time consisting almost entirely of wooden houses. The city burned to the ground; the handsome grey stone city which replaced it during the next fifty years was the result of the English invasion. A second invasion, conducted by the Earl of Hertford in 1545, did

[1] VII., p. 233.

fairly effectively for the southern Scottish counties what the expedition of 1544 had done for the Lothians: the beautiful abbeys of Kelso and Melrose and Dryburgh were set on fire as well as numerous villages. The forces employed in these raids were partly English, partly foreign—German, French, Spanish, Italian, and Greek mercenaries. The incredible method of using inhuman gangster raids on a colossal scale to bring about a marriage-union of the English and Scottish crowns only seared the souls of the Scots with bitterness. It did more harm to Anglo-Scottish relations than all the Anglo-Scottish wars since the time of Edward I.

These last years of the reign of Henry VIII. were surely the most horrible period of English history. In an enlightened age, when philosophy and music and poetry were fashionable among all the governing class; when mediæval superstition had been cast aside; and under a king who lectured his parliament on religious unity and godliness, a young married woman, Anne Askewe, daughter of a Lincolnshire squire, was racked in order that she should be induced to affirm a belief in Transubstantiation and, on continued refusal, was burned to death at the stake (1546). Luckily for many people whose heads were in danger, the king himself died, amid a sea of executions, on 28th January 1547. Thomas Howard, third Duke of Norfolk, who had led the vanguard at Flodden, where his father was in chief command, was in prison in the Tower, condemned to die next morning on a charge of high treason. The death of the king saved him. When the reign ended the common people said: "The Iron world is now at an end, and the Golden world is returning."

CHAPTER VIII

ENGLAND IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

THE LAST YEARS of Henry VIII.; the reign of Edward VI.; the reign of Mary, were the decisive time for the English Reformation. King Henry's imposition of a kind of "Royal Catholicism"—as distinct from "Roman Catholicism"—was a failure. Lutheran views continued to spread. More and more of the people felt that they could not believe in Transubstantiation, put up with communion in one kind, or insist on celibacy of the clergy which makes the priesthood a separate and powerful caste. It was not that the people were particularly religious; but the expulsion of papal jurisdiction in 1534 had confirmed their taste for religious liberty, and they were not going to submit to domination by the priesthood nor to a kind of papacy of the king. True, while Henry VIII. lived, the people could not secure anything like religious freedom, yet the unquenchable heroism of Anne Askewe showed that even his ferocious power had a limit. Sir Thomas More, who died at Henry's hands for the same faith as Henry himself professed to hold, saw from his prison window Carthusian monks proceeding to the place of execution, and remarked to his daughter: "Dost thou not see, Meg, that these blessed fathers be now as cheerfully going to their deaths as bridegrooms to their marriage?"[1] The martyrs were by no means all on the Reformation side; and a king who could flay unmercifully his loyal subjects alike of the Roman and of the Reformed persuasion can have little claim to be either a religious leader or a benefactor to his people's religious life. The breach with Rome was a normal development from previous English history and from the contemporary circumstances and tendencies: but Henry VIII.'s ferocity was no indispensable element of the process. The Charterhouse monks, Fisher, More, and the Protestant martyrs like Anne Askewe, could have been left in peace without the slightest danger to king and kingdom.

A dissolution of the monasteries was probably inevitable and, on the whole, likely to be beneficial in a country which was steadily becoming Protestant; but King Henry's violent, and in some cases fraudulent, method of liquidation was a disaster. If the total income of the monasteries was only £140,000 a year, they cannot have been a serious economic factor in the community; the destruction of their buildings and the dispersion of their libraries was dead loss. John Leland, a priest who held the post of "King's Antiquary," set

[1] Roper, *More*, p. 80 (Early English Text Society, 1935).

out to make a survey of England and particularly of the monastic libraries just before the dissolution was begun. He spent six years on travel and survey, and made an enormous collection of notes on which he meant to base a *Description of the Realm of England*. He died before writing this, but his notes were preserved and were published by the Oxford antiquary, Thomas Hearne, in the early eighteenth century. Leland's England was a country of market-towns, magnificent abbeys, gentlemen's "seats" (a new feature, increasing after the dissolution of the monasteries), tilth and pasture, common and woodland.

Edward VI. who succeeded his father on the throne on 28th January 1547, was a boy of nine years old and of infirm health. He was intelligent, and rather cold, almost callous, it seemed. As, however, he was only fifteen when he died, little can be said about him, favourable or unfavourable: he cannot have had any effect upon policy.

Queen Catherine Parr, within about three months of King Henry's death, married Lord Seymour of Sudeley, younger brother of the Earl of Hertford; she died after giving birth to a daughter in August 1548. Lord Seymour seems then to have thought of marrying the Princess Elizabeth, who was a girl of sixteen, living at Hatfield House, a royal residence. Elizabeth, though by no means of a cold nature like that of her brother Edward, escaped from Lord Seymour's attentions by saying that she could not engage herself without consent of the king's council. Lord Seymour, an extremely ferocious, dissolute, and dangerous man, was condemned on a charge of treason by Bill of Attainder in 1549 and was executed. Henry VIII. had left behind him in his court a cloud of intrigue, treachery, and cruelty; it was in this poisoned atmosphere that the last Tudor king had to live.

There was one man who, though ambitious, was also honest and public-spirited. This was Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford, uncle of the king, created Lord Protector and Duke of Somerset (it might be said that he created himself) on the accession of Edward VI. Although he paid himself well, he had the interest of the king and the interest of the common people at heart, and he was a good steward for the crown. He was a religious man too, what is called a moderate reformer, and he brought the Reformation in England on to a middle way, much the same as that which, after the reaction of Mary's reign, Elizabeth was to establish for all time.

Somerset first turned his attention to Scotland, still at war with England. He had received as a charge from the dying Henry VIII. to complete the union of the two countries by means of the marriage of Edward and Mary. He prayed to God: "Have an eye on this small island of Britain." His vision was for one kingdom of the English and Scots, "with the sea for a wall and mutual love for a garrison." He only asked for fulfilment of the Treaty of Greenwich. As the Scots persisted in refusing to carry out its terms, he took an army to Scotland,

crossing the border, 4th September 1547. At Pinkie, near Edinburgh, he fought and won the last battle between English and Scots. The battle was worse than useless. The Scots disliked "the manner of the wooing," and the ill-starred Princess Mary was sent off to France to marry the Dauphin. Somerset returned to England victorious, yet having failed.

This man, the ravager of Scotland, was mild in civil administration. The whole apparatus of "Henrician" despotism was dropped. The Statute of Proclamations was repealed in parliament. The rack, block, and stocks were left to rot in the Tower. The Statute of Six Articles was repealed. Neither Romanists nor Protestants suffered for their faith. The people were allowed to do as they pleased, and they used this liberty to smash images and painted windows in churches. Chantries which provided masses for the dead, and religious guilds—with exceptions, were dissolved. The schools attached to the chantries were continued under the name of King Edward VI. Grammar Schools. In 1549 a Book of Common Prayer was issued under authority of parliament, in the English tongue, for use in all parish churches. This, the "First Prayer Book of Edward VI.," was edited by Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, and a committee of learned men. Cranmer maintained that the book provided only for the same religious service as had been used in England for fifteen hundred years." Cranmer's gift for writing beautiful solemn English and his spiritual nature produced the prayers, some translations from the mediæval breviary, some original, which are the glory of the Church of England and the cherished possession of all English-speaking peoples. The Preface states:

> And where, heretofore, there hath been great diversity in saying and singing in churches within this realm: some following Salisbury use, some Hereford use, some the use of Bangor, some of York, and some of Lincoln: Now, from henceforth, all the whole realm shall have but one use. And if any would judge this way more painful, because that all things must be read upon the book, whereas before, by the reason of so often repetition, they could say many things by heart: if those men will weigh their labour, with the profit in knowledge, which daily they should obtain by reading upon the book, they will not refuse the pain, in consideration of the great profit that shall ensue thereof.

If there were any diversity of interpretation, the parties were to resort to the bishop of the diocese, who at his discretion was to question and appease them, provided that "the same order be not contrary to anything contained in this book." It must be admitted that Somerset's religious settlement was reasonable and liberal. Nevertheless, in Devon and Cornwall people demanded the restoration of the Six Articles and the Mass in Latin. They rose in arms and were only quietened after some fighting (1549). The religious disturbance merged into social disturbance. Report declared that enclosures for sheep had thrown three hundred thousand persons out of work. Bishop Latimer's sermons preached

before Edward VI. at least confirm that there was serious decay in ploughland and yeomanry. The Lord Protector Somerset sympathised with the complaints and tried to restrict by proclamation the process of enclosure, and appointed a commission to investigate the whole question. The country gentry and their dependants made the commission's work so difficult, almost futile, that people rose in rebellion all over the south of England. Then East Anglia broke into revolt and Norfolk found a leader in a well-to-do tanner, Robert Ket. They were defeated on Mousehold Heath near Norwich by the Earl of Warwick (26th August 1549). Ket was captured and hanged.

Affairs were now not going well for Somerset. The Scottish war, naturally, brought on a French war which went badly for the English. John Dudley, Earl of Warwick, the victor of Mousehold Heath, was his deadly rival and gained ascendancy over the boy king. On 10th October 1549, Somerset was arrested and imprisoned in the Tower. He was released, however, after four months (6th February 1550). Peace was made with Henry II. of France (son of Francis I. who died in 1547); Boulogne was returned to the French who now also practically controlled Scotland. For nearly a year Warwick and Somerset (it was no longer Somerset and Warwick) remained uneasily together on the privy council, the king, aged thirteen, sitting at the head of the council and making little speeches prepared for him by Warwick. In October 1551 Warwick had himself made Duke of Northumberland. In the same month Somerset was again arrested and imprisoned in the Tower. He was charged with plotting against the king, convicted by a court of peers (including his rival Northumberland) and was executed, to the intense grief of the common people, who called him the "good duke," on 22nd January 1552. Ambitious and greedy of wealth, he was nevertheless a statesman of high merit, and in an age when high life was cruel and dissolute, he was humane and clean-living.

For the next eighteen months Northumberland, though he did not, like Somerset, take the title of Protector, ruled England for Edward VI. The more advanced Reformers now had their way. The First Prayer Book of Edward VI., with its attempt to satisfy Catholics and Protestants, had failed. Parliament in 1552 reissued the Prayer Book in a revised form made by Cranmer. This Second Prayer Book of Edward VI. was more definitely Protestant than the First Book; reissued after the Marian reaction by Queen Elizabeth, and again, after the Commonwealth by Charles II., it has come down substantially unaltered in the present Book of Common Prayer. Thus the Reformation in England was practically completed in 1552.

Next year King Edward VI. died at Greenwich Palace of consumption, 6th July 1553, after about six months' illness. As he was only fifteen years old then, his personality is little known, nor can his influence upon affairs have been great. There is no evidence to show whether he would have developed the bad qualities

of his able father, or the good qualities of his equally able half-sister, Elizabeth. He was an innocent boy, rather lonely on account of ill-health and latterly on account of the fierce schemers who surrounded him. He was religious and strongly Protestant; and some notes which he left show that he desired to be just and compassionate, and particularly to do something to help the common people. He must have liked Bishop Latimer's sermons, for he could have had another preacher if he had wanted.

Edward VI., some time in the last weeks of his life, had been induced by Northumberland to write out a will devising the crown "to the Lady Frances's heirs male . . . ; to the Lady Jane's heirs male." A little later, however, the dying boy had been made to cross out the 's after Jane and to interpolate "and her." Thus the clause read: "to the Lady Frances's heirs male . . . to the Lady Jane and her heirs male." As Lady Frances had no heirs male and was not herself named as a successor to the crown, while Lady Jane (in the amended devise) was, Northumberland's design seemed secure. For his son Guildford Dudley was the husband of Lady Jane Grey and would reign with her.

It is easy to imagine, if this design of Northumberland's had succeeded, what would have happened to the half-sisters of the late king, Mary and Elizabeth. Northumberland was playing for the greatest stake, and anyone who stood in his way might say if they passed his threshold: *Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch'entrate.*[1] Mary, who was staying at Hunsdon, a palace of Henry VIII. in Hertfordshire, was actually summoned two days before the king died to appear before the Council; and she might have gone under the impression that she was going to be recognised as queen. Some friend warned her of her danger. She took horse and fled into East Anglia and found refuge at Framlingham Castle, which belonged to the Duke of Norfolk, a Roman Catholic like herself, still in the Tower of London since the death of Henry VIII. had saved him from the block. A troop of horse, sent by Northumberland, arrived at Hunsdon the day after she left. The Princess Elizabeth was in the meantime left where she was, at Hatfield.

Lady Jane Grey (as she is usually known, though Jane Dudley was now her name) was not yet sixteen years old. She was, on her mother's side, the granddaughter of Mary, sister of Henry VIII., who first married Louis XII. of France and after his death, the Duke of Suffolk. She had been married to Guildford Dudley in May 1553. Gentle, accomplished, unambitious, fond of home, deeply religious (of the Reformed Faith), she was innocent of any kind of design upon the throne. Her tastes were scholarly. She could read Latin, Greek, French, Italian, and Hebrew. Roger Ascham of St. John's College, Cambridge, tutor to Princess Elizabeth and Latin Secretary to Edward VI., once found

[1] Dante, Inferno, Canto III., Preamble.

School of Holbein.

Reproduced by Courtesy of
The National Portrait Gallery.

EDWARD VI.

when he called at the Greys' house, that only Lady Jane was at home. She was reading Plato's *Phædo*; the rest of the family had gone hunting.

When King Edward died on 6th July 1553, the fact was kept secret for a few days. On 9th July Lady Jane was summoned "to receive an order from the king" to Sion House where Northumberland lived. Northumberland then informed her that King Edward was dead and that she had been named in the will as queen. The girl trembled, covered her face with her hands, and fell in a faint. Next day, Monday, 10th July, she was proclaimed Queen at St. Paul's Cross amid complete silence. She and her husband were taken by Northumberland to the Tower for their residence. While every moment Northumberland was expecting news of the capture of Mary, a messenger arrived from her with a letter. It was couched in the royal "we" and contained a peremptory order to the Lords of the Council to "cause our right and title to the Crown and government of this realm to be proclaimed in our city of London." Northumberland was uneasy at the receipt of this spirited letter. Lady Jane was showing inconvenient spirit too; for, when she was told that her husband, Northumberland's son, was to reign with her, she would allow no such thing unless parliament voted it.

In a day or two news came in that gentry were gathering round Mary at Framlingham. On 14th July, Northumberland, with six hundred hired soldiers, rode out of London for Newmarket where other companies of mercenaries had been ordered to assemble. As soon as he had left, the Lords of the Council in their turn began quietly to make arrangements for receiving Mary. On 19th June they summoned the Lord Mayor and proclaimed Mary Queen in Cheapside.

When Northumberland joined the main body of his troops in Cambridgeshire, he found them disaffected, ready to mutiny. He fell back with his troops upon Cambridge. On 18th June a letter arrived, sent by the dauntless Mary from Framlingham, ordering the Mayor of Cambridge to arrest him. On 19th June he yielded. Standing at the market cross, he asserted that he had only acted under orders from the Council; and throwing his cap in the air he cried "God save Queen Mary." He was practically a prisoner among his own troops. Lord Arundel arrived next day and took him off to London. The ten days' reign—if it was a reign—of Lady Jane Grey, was at an end. On 3rd August (1553) Queen Mary rode into London, her plain features almost beautiful, according to the report of Charles V.'s ambassador, with a flush of joy and triumph. In her train were Queen Anne (of Cleves), Princess Elizabeth, the Duchess of Norfolk, and the Duke, now set free from the Tower, and other magnates of the realm. Mary was not unmerciful in her triumph. Northumberland, the zealous "Reformer," though he recanted his religion for Catholicism, could scarcely expect to be spared. He was executed on Tower Hill on 21st August 1553. He was, in Professor Pollard's judgment, "the ablest English soldier of the century,"[1]

[1] A. F. Pollard, *Political History of England*, p. 98.

and he was one of the makers of the Reformation, for Cranmer could not have instituted " The Second Prayer Book of Edward VI." without him. Lady Jane Grey and her husband were kept in the Tower for six months. It is possible that recantation of their religion might ultimately have secured them a pardon, but they showed no inclination for this, no sign of weakness. After Sir Thomas Wyatt's rebellion, which was not made in support of them and with which they had nothing to do, they were executed on Tower Hill on the same day, the husband first. They both died bravely. Lady Jane ran up the steps of the scaffold, called the onlookers to witness that she died a true Christian woman, said to the executioner : " I pray you dispatch me quickly," tied a handkerchief over her eyes, and laid her head on the block. Before the axe fell she was heard to say : " Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit." She was sixteen years five months old.

If Wyatt's rebellion had succeeded, it was Princess Elizabeth, not Lady Jane Grey who would have been enthroned. Elizabeth was arrested and imprisoned in the Tower; later, pleasanter quarters were provided for her in the royal manor of Woodstock.

CHAPTER IX

THE MARIAN REACTION

MARY I. WAS born at Greenwich Palace, the favourite residence of the House of Tudor, on 18th February 1516. The first twelve years of her life were happy. Her father—vigorous, manly, jovial, cultured—was fond of her; from him she had her powers of courage and decision, her facility for languages, her taste for music. From her serious, pious Spanish mother, she had her deep piety, her devotion to the Roman Catholic Church. For her, however, as for her mother, happiness ended with the opening of the Divorce Question. She was seventeen years old when the sentence of divorce on Queen Katherine was finally pronounced and she herself was illegitimised. From that moment was confirmed in her the conviction of ill-usage by men, by the world, by fortune, the searing sense of grievance which poisons the mind and heart. This feeling of injured innocence, of the world against her, of rights denied her, combined with the Tudor will-power and "absolutism"—of which she had her full share—warped a character never at any time very sweet; and after the death of her mother in 1536 there was not even the semblance of family life or domestic comfort to check her bitterness. As far as material comforts went, she was well enough provided for; but residence away from court, in one country house after another, among papist nobles, did not equip her for understanding either the court or the people. Oddly enough, her sister Elizabeth, growing into womanhood in similar circumstances to Mary's, acquired somehow precisely this understanding of court and people. Mary, though she lacked the Tudor tact, had all the Tudor will-power and courage. In Edward VI.'s reign, when Northumberland was introducing a definitely Protestant character in the church services, Mary was commanded by royal letter to cease having the ancient service celebrated in her house. She was thirty-six years old at this time and replied tartly to her fifteen-year-old sovereign brother:

> "Give me leave to write what I think touching your Majesty's letters. Indeed they be signed with your own hand; and nevertheless, in my opinion, not your Majesty's in effect. Because it is well known that although (and our Lord be praised) your Majesty hath far more knowledge and greater gifts than any other of your years, yet it is not possible that your Highness can at these years be judge in matters of religion, and therefore I take it that the matter in your letter proceedeth from such as do wish those things to take place which be most agreeable to themselves, by whose doings (your Majesty not offended) I intend *not* to rule my conscience."

Such was the woman, unmarried, thirty-seven years old, who after long years of neglect and frustrated sense of right, now smarting under an iniquitous conspiracy against her, came to the throne of England, amid universal popularity. Her cousin, the Emperor Charles V., the Nestor of European monarchs, now drawing towards the end of his long reign, advised her, through his ambassador Renard, to think first of the quiet of the realm, and above all things to be a "good Englishwoman," *bonne Anglaise.* When the ambassador learned that Mary was going to start her reign by a burial service for her brother with the illegal Latin mass, he reported in alarm to his master that she would lose her popularity and ruin everything: *elle sera odieuse, suspecte, dangereuse.* Nobody, however, could stop her. She told Renard, when he brought Charles V.'s advice to her, that "she could not have her brother committed to the ground like a dog." About another part of Charles' advice she said: "She had never desired to marry while princess, nor did she desire it now; but if it were for the interests of the Church, she would do whatever he might advise." This was a new way of looking at royal marriages.

Henry VIII.'s many marriages, if they had done nothing else, had aroused widespread interest in the crown's domestic affairs; and from this may be dated the English people's tremendous zest in discussing royal engagements and marriages. All England took it for granted that the new queen would marry, and the people already had an aspirant for her hand: Edward Courtenay, Earl of Devon, grandson of Catherine, second daughter of King Edward IV. This young man, of the White Rose of York, would unite with the Red Rose of Lancaster which the Beaufort Tudors had inherited. This was the popular wish. The fact is that people were having more communication than formerly with each other, through increasing trade, through printing, through the religious ferment of the Reformation; and with this increase of communication with each other, this increase of information about current affairs, there grew up the sentiment called nationalism. The English were becoming national; and because Spain was Catholic, papal, and militant, English nationalism was, in effect, anti-Spanish. Consequently it was a great mistake when Queen Mary, who had no particular desire to marry at all, and was not influenced by reasons of state, made up her mind to accept a Spanish offer of marriage because this would be for the good of the Church—that is, would help her Roman Catholic reaction. The bulk of the people were probably not greatly unwilling to see the old religious services restored, but there was great resentment at the idea that these services should be restored with the help of Spain. Yet the advice of Charles V. to Mary at first was that she should not disturb the existing religious settlement.

The Catholic Restoration began almost at once. On 6th August 1553 King Edward VI. was buried in Westminster Abbey according to the service of the Church of England, but Mary attended Mass in the Tudor Chapel on the same

day. Some scandal was caused when it was remarked that the chaplain who swung the censer was a married man. The Princess Elizabeth refused to attend this Mass, but a few weeks later she consented to attend. Cranmer and Latimer were arrested, although obviously the queen would have preferred them to escape abroad, and she left them plenty of time to do so: but they would not move. The Mass was restored in every parish church without disturbance.

Parliament met in October 1553. Froude, who has no prejudices in favour of Mary, called the election which sent some five hundred men to the House of Commons, "on the whole, perhaps the fairest election which had taken place for many years." [1] Professor Pollard's re-examination seems to confirm this view.[2] The House of Lords, anyhow, was secured for the Catholic Restoration by the absence of the most Protestant bishops and secular peers implicated in Northumberland's plot. On 8th November the House of Commons, by 350 votes to 80, restored the Mass and the rule of clerical celibacy. The House, however, deliberately attached no penalties to the bill restoring the mass; no one was to be forced to attend. Nor would the House make any move to restore the lands of dissolved abbeys, though the monastic communities began to re-establish themselves—for instance, at Westminster where abbot and monks again for a brief spell functioned. Finally, the House would have nothing to do with the proposed Spanish marriage. This was objected to on "nationalist" grounds, but particularly owing to the fear—which events justified—that a Spanish alliance would drag England into a continental war in the Low Countries. Mary's answer to this was a Marriage Treaty which, however, her council drafted with some strictly limiting clauses. The bridgroom, Philip, son of Charles V. of Spain, was to have the title of King of England, but only so long as Mary lived. Spain, Naples, the Indies would be inherited by Don Carlos, son of the widower Philip by his first wife; only the offspring of Philip and Mary should inherit England, and to this succession would be attached Burgundy and the Low Countries. No foreigner was to be admitted to office in England. England was not to be involved in the war between France and the Empire (the perpetual Habsburg-Valois war for Italy, which went on to 1559). If the queen were to die childless, the connection of Philip of Spain with England was to cease. This treaty seemed to provide for all contingencies, but it did not satisfy the English gentry. Suddenly a rebellion broke out.

Mary's reign was riddled with conspiracies of which that of Northumberland was the first. Now one was afoot, arranged by anti-Spanish Englishmen, Protestant refugees abroad, and Henry II. of France. The moving spirit in England was Sir Thomas Wyatt, a Kentish gentleman, son of the poet. "He belonged to that high-spirited English breed of men with whom a few years

[1] *History of England*, v. p. 282. [2] *The Political History of England*, p. 102.

later hatred of Spain did duty for religion." [1] Lady Jane Grey's father, the Duke of Suffolk, was also one of the leaders of the rebellion. Kent was raised. Wyatt advanced upon London, and defeated the royal troops at Rochester (29th January) 1554. Mary's council at London advised her to flee, but the undaunted Tudor refused. She stayed in the city and appealed to the Lord Mayor for help. The train-bands of citizens responded. London Bridge was fortified with cannon. When Wyatt reached Southwark he found the way blocked. News arrived of the failure of the rebellion in Devon and the Midlands. Wyatt retired to Kingston, crossed the Thames there, advanced to Knightsbridge, and on to the Strand and as far as Temple Bar, through this onwards to Ludgate Hill. By this time he was practically surrounded; his retreat was cut off. His followers scattered. Wyatt himself surrendered with five followers (7th February). Queen Mary, who was residing at Whitehall, saw the prisoners being brought to Westminster, to be taken thence by water to the Tower. Few that entered thus through the Traitors' Gate ever returned. Lady Jane Grey and her husband were already there. They were executed on 12th February. The Princess Elizabeth was arrested and placed in the terrible Tower. Sir Thomas Wyatt was condemned to die. On 11th April he was taken out to the scaffold. He mounted the platform and before laying his head on the block did one of the few good actions of his life. He called out to the hushed crowd that the "Lady Elizabeth's Grace had no knowledge of his rising before it began."

The effect of Wyatt's rebellion was trouble, for it seems to have turned Queen Mary into something of a tiger. The rebellion had nearly lost her both her husband and her Catholic restoration. From that moment she had no pity.

Philip of Spain arrived with a hundred and fifty ships at Southampton on 20th July 1554. Queen Mary met him at Winchester; and they were married in Winchester Cathedral on 25th July.

On 12th November Mary's third [2] parliament met, after what seems again to have been a fair election; and on 20th November there arrived at Dover Cardinal Reginald Pole, grandson of George, Duke of Clarence, the brother of King Edward IV. Pole's mother was the Countess of Salisbury, executed at the orders of Henry VIII. in 1541. The Cardinal, who was a man of culture and ability, had been one of the greatest opponents of Henry VIII. on account of the breach with Rome, and was the author of a celebrated and caustic book written against the king. He was uncompromising, and as such had been delayed on his journey to England by the Emperor, for he was coming as legate for Pope Julius III., to receive the submission of England—a mission not likely to be attractive in the islanders' eyes, as Renard reported to the Emperor.

[1] Pollard, *op. cit.* p. 107.

[2] Mary's second parliament, March 1554, sanctioned the Spanish marriage.

On 30th November 1554, before the assembled Lords and Commons of parliament and in the presence of King Philip and Queen Mary, Pole absolved the English people from heresy and schism. Under the impulse of the Lord Chancellor, Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester since 1531 (deprived of his See under Edward VI., but now restored) the Lords passed bills for renewing the Heresy Acts against Lollards, including the celebrated De Heretico Comburendo of 1401. The Commons, according to Renard's report to the Emperor, thought this legislature *trop grefve*, too severe, but they reluctantly passed it. In other directions the parliament was not at all pliable, and showed no tendency to have Philip crowned or declared successor, as Mary, curiously infatuated of him, would have liked and worked hard for six weeks of the session to bring about. The French ambassador Noailles noticed this, reporting to the King of France: *Il ye a six semaines en ce parlement, où ilz faisaient compte que ne pouvent couronner ce roy ou lui faire succeder ce royaume.* So on 16th January 1555, the king and queen came to the House of Lords and declared parliament to be dissolved.

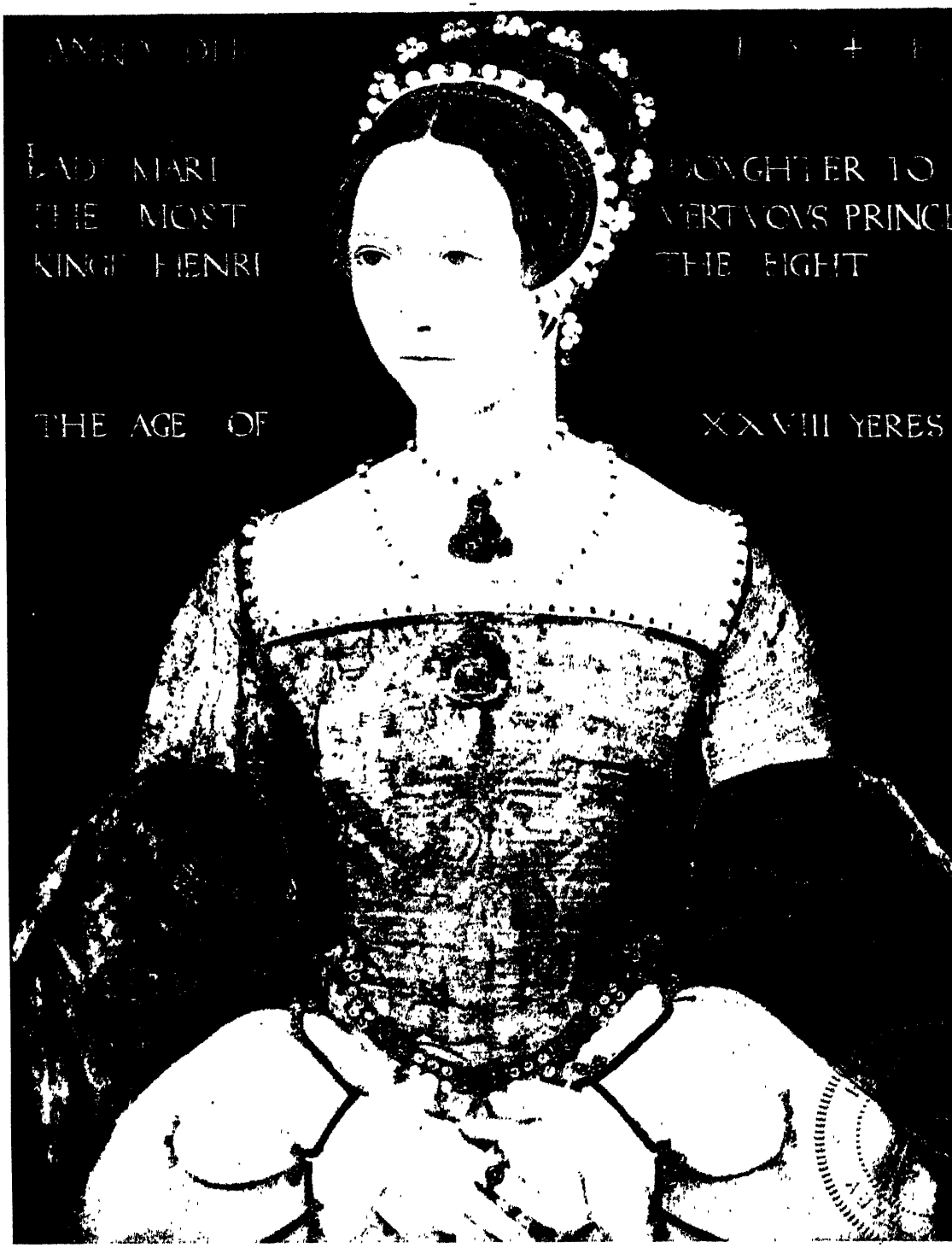
England now entered upon a period of gloom and horror, almost impossible for people at this time of day to imagine. It was as if a Spanish king and a queen who was half-Spanish by birth, and now wholly so by sympathy, looked at England through the eyes of the Spanish Inquisition. The pent-up bitterness of years of brooding on her mother's tragedy infected and governed all Mary's thoughts, words, and acts. Frustrated hopes of motherhood—her approaching confinement was twice announced—further darkened her mind and spirit. The growing indifference and coldness of her husband, which can hardly have escaped her from the first, entered like iron into her soul. Renard tried to make Philip be kinder. He pointed out that the marriage had been arranged by the Emperor because the French, through the marriage of the Dauphin with Mary of Scots, had completely gained Scotland. It was necessary, accordingly, for Philip to stay in England and to be gracious. Renard knew that the queen was not very attractive. "Your Highness, it is true, might wish that she was more agreeable; but on the other hand she is infinitely virtuous, and things being as they are, your Highness, like a magnanimous prince, must remember her condition and exert yourself, as far as you conveniently may, to assist her in the management of the kingdom." But Philip was only anxious to go back to Spain. With difficulty he was persuaded to stay until August (1555).

Meanwhile the faggot and stake had become regular sights at Smithfield. The revived Heresy Bills had no sooner gone through parliament than the Romanist bishops set to at their terrible work. The first of the Marian martyrs was John Rogers, of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, a clergyman who had helped in the Tyndale and Coverdale (or Matthew) Bible of 1537. He was burned on

4th February 1555. John Hooper, of Merton College, Oxford, Bishop of Gloucester, was burned on 9th February. A succession of heroic deaths marked the rest of this reign which was dripping with blood.

King Philip took leave of Queen Mary at Greenwich Palace on 28th August 1555, promising to return soon. Before he left, the Princess Elizabeth, who had been removed from Woodstock to Ashridge (near Berkhamsted) was invited from there to visit the king and queen; thus for the first, and last, time she met the man who was so deeply to be concerned with her future greatness. Philip, before departing, advised Mary to show more kindness to Elizabeth. Next year his father, Charles V., abdicated, and King Philip of England became King of Spain. For forty-two years he wove Catholic webs of policy in his gloomy palace of the Escorial; he came just once more to England (for about three weeks, March 1557).

John Foxe, of Magdalen College, Oxford, was at this time thirty years old, making a living at Basle by reading proofs for the printer Oporinus. Deeply interested in reform and the reformers, he made notes of the moving events that chequered this gloomy period; he investigated documents and made transcriptions; he heard and he compared and tested the stories of exiles, refugees, and travellers. When the ghastly reign of Mary was over, he returned to England and completed and published his *Book of Martyrs*. There are enshrined the glories and the sufferings of the Marian martyrs. The best known description is of the deaths of Nicholas Ridley, Bishop of London, and Hugh Latimer, Bishop of Worcester, burned on 15th October 1555, outside the Bocardo Gate of Oxford, in front of Balliol College. A keg of powder was placed among the faggots of each pyre, but the two martyrs burnt for some minutes before the charges exploded. Latimer's call out of the fire to his companion in martyrdom is a trumpet-call of constancy and freedom: "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley; play the man. We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out." Ridley's answer was: "*Domine recipe spiritum meum.*" Latimer's in English: "O Father of Heaven, receive my soul." Cranmer was still Archbishop of Canterbury, though suspended from his See and in the Tower since Wyatt's rebellion in 1554. Sentence was pronounced upon him in Christ Church Cathedral by Edmund Bonner, Bishop of London on (14th February 1556), after an instruction had been received from Pope Paul IV. Cranmer was sixty-seven years old, a sensitive, delicate spirit, momentarily broken. He signed a submission: "To take the Pope for chief head of this Church of England so far as God's laws and the customs of this realm will permit." His mental torture was beyond endurance: he took back his submission, and made it again. In all he "submitted" five times. On 21st March, however, when he was taken out of his prison in Oxford and brought to the stage in front of St Mary's Church,



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MARY I.

where he was to make his public submission, the old man made a calm speech, exhorting the people to obey God and, next to God, the king and queen. He recalled his recantation: "And forasmuch as my hand offended in writing contrary to my heart, my hand shall therefore be punished first, for if I may come to the fire, it shall be burnt first. As for the Pope, I utterly refuse him, as Christ's enemy and Antichrist, with all his false doctrine." He was hurried off to the piled-up faggots in front of Balliol (for Queen Mary and Cardinal Pole had decided that he should die, submission or no submission); and there at the stake the father of the Reformed Church of England steadily held his right hand in the flames, "and never stirred nor cried."

Queen Mary and her country were now governed absolutely by Cardinal Reginald Pole and a group of Roman Catholic zealots. She realised now that her husband, whose affection she never had, would not return. She knew that she had lost the affection of her people which was once hers. "She lives," the French ambassador reported, "in a continual fury, at having neither the presence of her husband nor the love of her people." Through one of the amazing revolutions of policy, of which history has so many examples, the Papalist Philip of Spain found it "imperative" to go to war with the Pope, the uncompromising Neapolitan Paul IV., who wanted to expel the Spaniards from Naples with the help of the French. And Mary, who for the sake of the Pope was losing everything in England, now for the sake of a husband who deserted her, was to join the war against her spiritual master. It is true that England's war, which was declared on 7th June 1557, was only against France: but with England's resources pooled with Spain's military action in north-eastern France was equal to military action in Southern Italy. Paul recognised this by cancelling Pole's legatine authority in England and summoning him to Rome to be tried for "heresy;" but the Cardinal, who had become Archbishop of Canterbury after Cranmer's execution, stayed where he was.

King Philip had paid a brief visit to England in March 1557 in order to persuade Mary and the Privy Council to authorise English participation in the war, in spite of the Marriage Treaty which had stipulated that England should not be involved in Spain's chronic quarrel with France. After the English declaration of war in June, Mary sent an army to France which arrived just too late to share in the great Spanish victory outside St Quentin (10th August 1557); but they took part in the less creditable operation of sacking and burning the town. As usual, the coming of winter put a stop to hostilities, or put a stop sufficiently to enable poverty-stricken governments to reduce the size of garrisons. Queen Mary's miserable reign, marked by war, famine, conspiracy, and persecution of the people, had also consequently an insolvent exchequer. The garrison at Calais was under strength. The French were recovering from their defeat at St Quentin. In January 1558 Francis Duke of

Guise made a surprise attack on Calais. No relief came from England. A Spanish force tried to relieve the town from the side of Gravelines, ineffectually. On 6th January 1558 the English governor of Calais, Lord Wentworth, who had only 500 soldiers in the garrison, capitulated. Calais was a small town, with less than 5000 inhabitants, and its defence cost more than its trade was worth. From the military point of view England was probably safer without it than with it. The loss seems to have been received almost with apathy in England; but to the proud Tudor, sick woman as she was, the loss of the last Plantagenet province in France was a mortal blow, though there is no evidence of her saying that *Calais* would be found engraven on her heart. As a matter of fact, English ships, in conjunction with the Spanish army on the Flanders coast, helped to win a victory over the French at Gravelines six months later, 8th July 1558. An energetic naval commander could have gone and retaken Calais; but Mary's fleet had no Drake or Hawkins. A dying woman, hated by her people, could not infuse energy into an unpopular war. Always ill, she contracted fever and died quietly and piously, with her eyes on the elevated Host, at St James's Palace, on 17th November 1558. Luckily for himself, Archbishop Pole died at Lambeth on the same day. The fires of Smithfield were still burning: three men and two women were committed to the flames in November before Mary died.

Attempts have been made to place upon parliament the responsibility for the shocking burning of her own people—282 of them at least—by Mary. This defence will not do. The legislature of parliament, as Professor Pollard has pointed out, was permissive. The executive government was under no legal obligation to proceed against the Reformers nor, after proceeding, to require the penalty of burning. And Mary was head of the executive government.

CHAPTER X

THE EARLY YEARS OF THE REIGN OF ELIZABETH

THE DEATH OF Mary probably saved the country from a general revolt with the object of placing the Princess Elizabeth on the throne; there was nothing now to prevent a peaceful and happy succession. There is an oak in Hatfield Park under which, tradition says, Elizabeth was sitting when a messenger, booted and spurred, came and announced her accession to the throne. The announcement could be no surprise to her. Mary's death was expected; and prudent counsellors had visited Hatfield from time to time, making necessary arrangements for the coming reign. The chief counsellor was William Cecil, Lord Burghley, a Northamptonshire squire, who had been a government official under the Protector Somerset and under Edward VI., but out of office during the reign of Mary. Cecil was rich, influential, a member of parliament. He was thirty-eight years old, a Protestant, of tolerant views, methodical, industrious, public-spirited. The new queen could have no better guide.

Elizabeth was the only child of Henry VIII. and Anne Boleyn, and was born at Greenwich Palace on 7th September 1533. Although her mother died on the scaffold in 1536, her child was not neglected; she was given into the charge of various court ladies, and later was provided with excellent tutors, the most famous of whom was Roger Ascham of St John's College, Cambridge. Queen Catherine Parr was kind, received her at court, and after King Henry's death took her to Sudeley Castle in Gloucestershire. She acquired a knowledge of Greek, and could write and speak Latin, French, and Italian fluently.

In Mary's reign, from the time of Wyatt's rebellion, Elizabeth was a prisoner, though in easy circumstances; after a spell in the Tower of London, she lived in royal houses: Ashridge, Woodstock, Hatfield. She spent her time chiefly in reading: she read Cicero, the Bible, probably the chronicles of England. She was fond of the drama and of masques but seems to have had little opportunity for these things. It was all rather a dull time for a high-spirited, beautiful girl, and rather dangerous too, as desperate men conspired against Mary, and one never knew what, under torture, they might "confess" about Elizabeth's loyalty. After her accession to the throne, at the age of twenty-five, she was going to have no more dull times, though she was not, for at any rate another thirty years, to be quit of personal danger.

The privy councillors went down to Hatfield. On Sunday, 20th November, Queen Elizabeth held her first council: in her address she declared: "I mean

to direct all my actions by good advice and counsel." She swore-in Cecil, who may have helped her in preparing this address. In November she moved up to London, attended by a thousand lords and ladies. The privy council was remodelled by leaving out the Romanists and adding moderate Catholics or Reformers. Mary was buried on 14th December (1558) at Westminster with a requiem mass in which the persecuting Bishop Bonner and the Marian Abbot of Westminster took part. Queen Elizabeth must have been present, as her absence is not reported. A committee of moderately minded clergymen was set up to revise Edward VI.'s Second Prayer Book, which by its explicit Protestantism had helped to provoke the Marian reaction; but the monastic communities which had begun to re-establish themselves under Mary (without any resumption of monastic property) quietly dissolved themselves; yet the abbot and monks of Westminster managed to stay until after the coronation. The Spanish ambassador, Count de Feria, saw and reported that England was "lost" unless Queen Elizabeth were taken in hand at once. Philip's reply (10th January 1559) to the ambassador was—"I have decided . . . to sacrifice my private inclination in the service of our Lord, and to marry the Queen of England." He instructed de Feria to make the marriage contract conditional on the Queen's professing the same religion as the King of Spain. The queen's reply to the Count de Feria, when he put the proposal before her, was clever: that his Majesty's friendship was as sufficient for her protection as his love. She had no desire to marry, and she did not believe in the power of the Pope to allow her to have her sister's husband. The queen had been crowned at Westminster Abbey, 15th January 1559, using the English liturgy, which Bishop Oglethorpe of Carlisle read. The coronation procession was viewed by joyous crowds. Children sang songs. Women threw flowers into her litter. The City Corporation presented her with an English Bible. Men were seen weeping for joy. Shakespeare, who was born five years after this, knew, doubtless, about this glorious occasion, and may have had it in mind when he wrote in the opening of *King Richard III.*:

> Now is the winter of our discontent
> Made glorious summer by this sun of York.

After all, Queen Elizabeth's descent was as much Yorkist as Lancastrian.

Elizabeth's first parliament met on 25th January (1559), with sixty-one lay peers and only ten bishops, for a number of seats were vacant by death; and some bishops were too old or ill or timid to attend. The queen could count on a clear majority among the peers. As regards the House of Commons, charges have been made of the crown influencing elections. Yet this would not seem to be inferred from the fact that one-third of the Commons had sat in Mary's last parliament. A Supremacy Bill and a Uniformity Bill were passed into law,

placing the Church of England, which had gone through so many phases since 1529, in what is still its position.

The Act of Supremacy of 1559, declaring that by the Act 1, 2, Philip and Mary, England was still under the bondage of Rome, repealed that Act. It also revived Henry VIII.'s Act of Supremacy and Act prohibiting Appeals to Rome. It prescribed an oath to all persons deriving fee or wages from Her Majesty: "I A.B. do utterly testify and declare on my conscience, That the Queen's Highness is the only supreme governor of this realm."

The Act of Uniformity repealed the Marian Act which itself repealed an Act of Uniformity of Edward VI. The effect was to restore the Second Prayer Book of Edward VI., "with the alterations and additions therein added and appointed by this Statute." Thus the revised Prayer Book of Queen Elizabeth came into force. The chief difference between this and the Second Prayer Book of Edward VI. was made in order to spare Catholics unnecessary pain and to make it easier for them to conform. The Edwardian litany in the fifth petition ending, *Good Lorde deliver us*, had:

> From all sedition and prieuie conspiracie, from the tyranny of the Bysshop of Rome and al hys detestable enormities, and from all false doctrine, etc.

The Elizabethan book omitted the reference to the Bishop of Rome and his enormities. Also, the "Black Rubric" at the end of the Edwardian order for the administration of the Holy Communion was omitted. The Black Rubric pointed out that although communicants were directed to receive the bread and wine kneeling, "it is not ment thereby, that any adoracion is doone, or ought to be doone, eyther unto the Sacramental bread or wyne there bodily receyued, or unto anye reall and essencial presence there beyng of Christ's natural fleshe and bloude." The Elizabethan Statute of Uniformity was drafted in the hope that all the people would find their religion in "their parish church or chapel accustomed;" and they were directed by the state to attend every Sunday on pain of the forfeit of twelve pence for every absence, to be levied by the church-wardens for the poor of the parish. The Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England were enacted by convocation in 1563, being substantially the same as the Forty-two Articles (with three omitted) issued by Cranmer under authority of Edward VI. All the bishops, except Dr Kitchin of Llandaff, refused to take the oath, under the Act of Supremacy, acknowledging the queen as the "only Supreme Governor of this realm." When Nicholas Heath, Archbishop of York, warned Elizabeth against departing from the steps of her blessed sister, the queen proudly answered: "I take those who maintain here the Bishop of Rome and his ambitious pretences to be enemies to God and to me." All the non-juring bishops were deprived of their Sees, and new bishops ordained by Matthew Parker, the Archbishop of Canterbury, appointed (17th December

1559) in succession to Reginald Pole. Parker had been Dean of Lincoln and Master of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, but had resigned these appointments at the accession of Mary and had since been living in retirement. Queen Elizabeth and Archbishop Parker were the makers of the new religious settlement, the *Via Media Anglicana*. It was, take it all in all, a moderate settlement, moderately and considerately administered. It was contrasted with Queen Mary's horrible persuasion by rack and fire. There was no inquisition; the queen said that she would not " make a window into men's souls."

Besides the making of the *Via Media Anglicana*, there was one other notable event of the year 1559. King Philip, his offer of marriage rejected by Queen Elizabeth, offered himself to another Elizabeth, daughter of Henry II. of France. This showed that the long Franco-Spanish War was practically at an end. England was still nominally at war with France, so, to prevent her being left alone in the war, Elizabeth sent delegates to take part in the Franco-Spanish Peace Conference of Cateau-Cambrésis. She was thus a party to the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis, signed on 2nd April 1559. Calais was the chief point of contention. Elizabeth had to resign herself to the loss for the time being, probably for ever; for by the treaty she left Calais in the hands of the French for eight years. It was to be returned to England at the end of this period, under penalty of half a million crowns, and provided that in the meantime neither party made any active aggression on the other; moreover, France's ally Scotland was included as a country against which no active aggression should be done. " Under this transparently face-saving device was Calais virtually ceded to France." [1]

[1] J. B. Black, *The Oxford History of England*, Reign of Elizabeth (1936), p. 33.

CHAPTER XI

THREE MARIES

SINCE THE BATTLE of Pinkie in 1547, Queen Mary of Scotland had been at the Court of Henry II. In 1558 she was married to the Dauphin. On the death of Henry II., pierced with a Scottish knight's lance in a tournament, 10th July 1559, Francis and Mary became King and Queen of France. Mary, a Roman Catholic sovereign, regarded Elizabeth, the daughter of Anne Boleyn, as incapable of inheriting the English crown, and herself, the granddaughter of Margaret of England, as the rightful heir. She therefore assumed the royal arms of England along with those of France. Scotland was practically a French province, under the regency of the Queen Mother, Mary of Guise, a tall, handsome, capable woman and, like all the Guises, papist to the core. All this and more was in the mind of a contemporary who described the situation: "The French king bestriding the realm, having one foot in Calais, the other in Scotland. Steadfast enmity, but no steadfast friendship abroad." It was the Reformation in Scotland that saved Elizabeth from this isolation.

For years there had been some connection between the Reform movement in the two countries. In 1547, the first year of the reign of Edward VI., the Protector Somerset and Scottish Reformers at St Andrews had been in communication with each other; the English campaign of that year and the battle of Pinkie were worse than useless to the cause of Scottish reform, but they proved the English interest in the idea of political union.

The Scottish reformer, John Knox, had been carried off a prisoner to France by the French force which took St Andrews in 1547. After six months in a galley on the Loire and twelve months in prison ashore, he was released through the intervention of Edward VI.—that is, of the Protector Somerset. Coming to England Knox was made one of Edward VI.'s chaplains and was offered the Bishopric of Rochester, which he declined. On the accession of Mary Tudor, he had to flee to the continent—to Geneva, to Frankfort. Impressed by the fact that the three Marian sovereigns or rulers—Mary Tudor of England, Mary of Guise, Regent of Scotland, and Mary Stuart, Queen of Scotland—were fanatic Roman Catholics, he published a tract called, *The First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women.* It was very unfortunate for his cause that while this tract, from his point of view, applied well enough to the three Maries, it was rather hard on the Princess Elizabeth whom circum-

stances were driving on to his side. If Elizabeth had not read his tract she certainly knew about it and resented it.

In 1559 the movement of the Reformers in Scotland was growing stronger and the rule of the regent, Mary of Guise, in spite of French garrisons, was being shaken. Knox returned from Geneva to Scotland. Under his vigorous impulse, reform swept the country, but the prelates were still fairly powerful, and Mary of Guise's French professional soldiers, though few, had the superiority which trained troops, resolutely led, always have over popular levies. Nevertheless the French were penned up in Edinburgh Castle and in Leith; if those places fell, reform and Anglo-Scottish relations were safe; but if they were relieved by another expedition from France, reform would be suppressed in Scotland and England's turn would come next.

Elizabeth, inexperienced in foreign affairs, had a very difficult choice to make. She disliked rebels. She disliked the idea of identifying herself with a Calvinistic Reform movement, so different from her own *Via Media*. And help sent from England to the Scottish reformers would be an act of aggression against the Scottish Crown, allied to France, and therefore would invalidate the clause of the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis for the return of Calais to the English Crown within eight years. Elizabeth made the difficult choice, advised by Cecil, who warmly commented: "God send her as good health as she hath a heart." Knox wrote her a letter (20th July 1559) not withdrawing the views against women's rule expressed in his tract, yet, so to speak, offering reconciliation over it. A better Scottish diplomatist was William Maitland of Lethington, a crown official who had joined the reformers. Elizabeth made her decision. She sent the Duke of Norfolk to meet a delegation of the Scots Lords at Berwick, on 27th February 1560: there the Treaty of Alliance of Berwick was signed. An English naval expedition had already reached the Firth of Forth even before the Treaty was signed. In March Lord Grey led an English army across the border, marched to Edinburgh and joined the reformers in besieging Leith. Mary of Guise died, unconquered, in Edinburgh Castle on 10th June 1560, leaving a memory for magnanimity "even in the hard minds of the sturdiest of the Scottish reformers."[1] The French troops in Leith, closely blockaded by land and sea, were in a hopeless position: so Queen Mary's delegates, Jean de Monluc, Bishop of Valence, made terms with Cecil who (having journeyed from England at his own expense) was in the English camp. The Treaty of Edinburgh was signed on 6th July 1560, providing for the evacuation of Scotland by French officials and soldiers, except what would now be called a "token" force of 120 French men-at-arms in the fortresses of Dunbar and Inchkeith. This was the end of the famous "*Auld Alliance*" of Scotland and France which had "encircled" England since 1295—for two hundred and sixty-five years. A clause in the Treaty of Edinburgh also

[1] J. H. Burton, *History of Scotland*, iii. 381.

stipulated that the Queen of Scots should remove the three royal lions of England from her coat of arms.

Reform was now triumphant in the Scottish church and state ; yet there was still difficulty ahead. On 5th December 1560, King Francis II. of France died. Next year, 14th August 1561, the widowed French queen, Mary of Scotland, embarked at Calais for her native country. Shadowed by an English squadron she arrived in the Firth of Forth and landed at the Port of Leith on 19th August. She was eighteen years old: Queen Elizabeth was twenty-seven. They were both beautiful: Queen Mary was reported lovely. Both queens were high-spirited, but cultured, capable, clever ; but Queen Mary's heart in the long-run governed her head, and Queen Elizabeth's head her heart.

Queen Mary, rather coolly received by the citizens of Edinburgh, took up her residence at Holyroodhouse. As a Catholic sovereign among a predominantly Protestant people she could not do otherwise than inaugurate or acquiesce in a system of religious toleration. Her political interest was in the " English Question "—that is, she desired not to supplant Elizabeth but to be declared " second in the Kingdom," heir-presumptive to the Crown of England in the event of Elizabeth not having children. She employed Maitland of Lethington to win acceptance of this proposal from Queen Elizabeth ; but the Scottish diplomatist failed in this mission. Elizabeth declared that she would not meddle with the thorny question of the succession to the crown : " They shall succeed that have most right." She admitted that she knew of no one with a better right than Mary's. Queen Mary did not help matters by withholding ratification of the Treaty of Edinburgh until Elizabeth should acknowledge her right.

Both queens were having trouble in their matrimonial projects. Elizabeth was certainly dallying with Lord Robert Dudley (later Earl of Leicester). On 8th September 1560 Dudley's wife, Amy, daughter of Sir John Robsart, was found dead at the foot of a stair in Cumnor House (three miles out of Oxford) where she lived while Dudley was at court. Rumour (in effect, the Spanish ambassador) pointed to her death as the result of a plot of Dudley (or even of Dudley and Elizabeth) ; whereas, in truth, just such a death, in suspicious circumstances, was the one thing to prevent a woman of Elizabeth's controlled mind and heart from blundering into a dangerous marriage. Mary Queen of Scots, in a somewhat similar crisis seven years later, let her heart run away with her mind.

Elizabeth knew that Mary would marry again, and the great danger was that the new husband would be another French prince or Don Carlos, son of Philip II. ; Elizabeth wanted her to marry Lord Robert Dudley. What did happen was that Mary married her cousin Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, 29th July 1565. Darnley was a Roman Catholic, a grandson of Margaret Tudor,

the daughter of Henry VII., wife of James IV., who, when a widow, had married the Earl of Angus. Thus he had nearly as good a claim to the English crown as had Queen Mary. This marriage practically ruined all chances of a peaceful settlement between the crowns of England and Scotland. On 19th June 1567, a son, James (later James I. of England) was born to the Queen and King of Scots—for Darnley had been proclaimed king by his wife. The birth of a Scottish prince of the Stuart-Tudor line made the question of the English succession more acute than ever; but Elizabeth, when the news arrived, seemed only to think of her own solitary state. Falling into the Scots idiom, she remarked: "The Queen of Scots is *leichter* (lighter) of a fair son, and I am but a barren stock."

Henry, King of Scots, was a thoroughly dissolute and degraded man, and did not long hold his wife's affection. She became attached to James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell, warden of the Scottish marches, a desperate and unscrupulous man, rash and violent, though with a dash of chivalry in him. King Henry Darnley's debauches had brought on a dangerous illness. Mary placed him in the house of a dissolved monastery outside the wall of Edinburgh called Kirk o' Field. While she was dancing in Holyroodhouse, on the night of 9th February 1567, King Henry was strangled and the Kirk o' Field was blown up. The plotter of this crime was Bothwell, and Mary was not ignorant of the plot. Queen Elizabeth warned her—and warned her kindly, to be discreet. (24th February 1567): "Oh, Madam, I should ill fulfil the part either of a faithful cousin, or of an affectionate friend, if I were to content myself with saying pleasant things to you and made no effort to preserve your honour. I cannot but tell you what all the world is thinking . . . I implore you deeply to consider of the matter—at once, if it be the nearest friend you have, to lay your hands upon the man who has been guilty of the crime." The warning was unheeded. The next step was carried out when Bothwell carried off Mary to the fortress of Dunbar, divorced his wife, and married Mary on 15th May. This time Mary had gone too far for the Scots lords and burghers. They could endure her French ways and French ladies, their balls and songs and mischievous shouts and revels: but they could not endure this open flouting, as they held it, of all form and decency.

The Queen of Scots had flung the crown of Scotland after the crown of England.[1] She had to abdicate the throne. Her baby son James became king under the regency of the Earl of Moray. Her subjects rose against her, she surrendered to them without a fight at Carberry Hill near Pinkie Field—15th June 1567, one month after her marriage with Bothwell, who now fled to Dunbar and thence took ship to Norway.

Queen Mary was now imprisoned in Lochleven Castle, but on 2nd May 1568

[1] Sir R. L. Mackie, *A Short History of Scotland* (1930), p. 250.

escaped with the help of the Hamilton family. Once more men gathered around her, and this time she risked battle, at Langside near Glasgow, on 13th May and was defeated. She had now no course open but to flee, and no way open but due south. On 15th May she was at Dundrennan Abbey on the Solway with a few horsemen. On 16th May, with about fifteen of her men, she stepped into an open fishing boat and crossed to Workington in Cumberland and wrote from there to Queen Elizabeth, asking permission to see her. Elizabeth refused (8th June 1568) : " When you are acquitted of this crime (Darnley's murder), I will receive you with all honour. Till that is done, I may not."

Mary was to be nineteen years in England without seeing Elizabeth. An inquiry was instituted into the question of Darnley's murder, but was never concluded ; the strongest evidence was the " Casket Letters " sent by the Regent Moray to England. They were said to have been left by Bothwell in Edinburgh Castle ; and they contained letters and poems in the French tongue, which Mary habitually wrote. These—if genuine, and no good reason has been brought forward to show that they are not—proved Mary's complicity in the murder. Mary was given into the charge of various noblemen and their wives successively : her places of residence were at Carlisle, Bolton, Tutbury, Wingfield, Coventry, Chatsworth, Sheffield (Sussex), Chartley, Fotheringay. She was well treated, had her own servants and ladies, and lived at the charges of Queen Elizabeth, the cost being about £50 a week. She had money of her own too, drawing a pension as Queen-Dowager of France. Professor Neale has come to the conclusion that she used this money " to make payments to the most pernicious English Catholic exiles, maintain secret intelligence with England's enemies, and seduce the simple villagers in her neighbourhood with lavish alms." [1] There was a rebellion, known as that of " the Northern Earls," in favour of a Roman Catholic restoration and of Mary, in 1569. This was followed by a Bull of Excommunication of Pope Pius V. against Elizabeth, whose subjects were thus, according to Romanist ideas, released from their allegiance to her. In 1572 a Florentine banker doing business in London called Roberto Ridolfi tried to organise with the Spanish ambassador a plot for bringing over a Spanish army from the Netherlands, for marrying Mary to the Duke of Norfolk and making them king and queen of England and Scotland. The plot was discovered and Norfolk was executed—the last duke in England at that time. His death " sealed the ruin of that old nobility which was incompatible with the New Monarchy." [2] Ridolfi was safe abroad. Mary was not known to be implicated. Plotting went on, and there was grave danger that Elizabeth would be assassinated. In 1584 a number of gentry formed a Protestant Association to protect her, but the secret service—a very fine one—of Secretaries

[1] J. E. Neale, *Queen Elizabeth* (1934), p. 256.
[2] A. F. Pollard, *The Political History of England*, p. 300.

Burghley and Walsingham, was the best protection. In 1583 Francis Throckmorton schemed with another Spanish ambassador, Mendoza, to put Mary on the throne. He was executed. In 1586 Anthony Babington plotted and met the same fate. Walsingham had been taking copies of Babington's correspondence for some time, resealing them, and then forwarding them to their destination. These copies proved Mary's complicity. She was brought to trial in October 1586 before a commission of peers, privy councillors, and judges at Fotheringay and was convicted. Elizabeth, who had spared Mary so often, put off signing the death-warrant until 1st February 1587. Mary was executed at Fotheringay on 7th February, meeting her death with quietness and fortitude. She was forty-four years old. Curiously Elizabeth lost her nerve and tried to placate the monarchs of France and Spain by protesting that though she had signed the warrant she had not meant to send it to the sheriff; she put the blame on Secretary Davison who had forwarded the warrant, and he spent eighteen months in the Tower of London.

CHAPTER XII

FOREIGN POLICY

THE CAPTIVITY OF Mary had at any rate freed Elizabeth from all anxiety from the side of Scotland. James VI. was brought up by the regency. After he assumed the government of his kingdom he made a treaty of domestic alliance with England (1585). He protested formally against the execution of his mother, but bore Queen Elizabeth no ill-will. He regarded himself, and most people regarded him, as the heir of Elizabeth.

Elizabeth's great trouble abroad came from France and from Spain, and there was danger that they both might be joined politically, after Philip II. married in 1559 Elizabeth Valois, eldest daughter of Henry II. and Catherine de Medici. All Elizabeth Valois' four brothers died childless.

The expedition into Scotland and the Treaty of Edinburgh, 1560, practically ended all danger from Scotland, destroying the Franco-Scottish Alliance. Events soon gave Elizabeth an opportunity of intervening in France. On 1st March 1562 a congregation of French Calvinists, known as Huguenots, was massacred by Francis Duke of Guise (the conqueror of Calais), or rather by his men who got out of hand. This started the French Wars of Religion. A complete "Guise" victory would mean the Catholic Reaction supreme in France as it already was in Spain, and perhaps a crusade of Western Europe against England. In September the Huguenot leaders, Condé and Coligny, not unsolicited, asked for an alliance from Elizabeth, and signed the Treaty of Hampton Court (20th September 1562). Elizabeth undertook to supply 3000 men and a loan of 140,000 crowns, in return for Havre which she was to hold as a pledge until Calais should be surrendered to her. The English soldiers were sent, but could not save Rouen for the Huguenots nor avert the defeat at Dreux. The English garrison of Havre, under the Earl of Warwick, defended the town throughout the winter of 1562–63 and into the summer. After starvation and disease had done their work, Warwick surrendered Havre to the forces of King Charles IX. on 26th July 1563. The defence had been enormously costly to Elizabeth both in men and money. There was now no chance of her recovering Calais, and she had done no good to the Huguenots.

After the unfortunate Havre adventure, Queen Elizabeth kept clear of intervention in France. In 1571 she was even in negotiation with the Court of France in regard to the Duke of Anjou, brother of Charles IX., the future Henry III. who was proposed as her husband. The negotiation, never very

serious, was finished when Catherine de Medici and her son had all the Huguenots they could lay their hands on massacred on St Bartholomew's Day, 24th August 1572. This terrible crime, naturally, ruined for years all prospect of toleration in France and tied the French court to Catholic reaction and to Philip II. of Spain, the leader of the Catholic Reaction. It therefore accentuated intensely the dangerous situation of England, coming more and more to be regarded as the leading Protestant state. Religion was dividing Europe into two camps, with the Romanist powers enormously preponderant in physical resources; indeed, since the rise of the Jesuit Order and the consolidation of the Roman Church effected by the Council of Trent in 1563, the moral resources behind the Catholic Reaction seemed enormously preponderant too.

It was unfortunate for everybody in Central and Western Europe that Roman Catholic and Protestant could not adopt a policy of live and let live. At the end of a hundred years of sanguinary struggle and appalling waste, the religious balance of power was not substantially altered. Certainly Queen Elizabeth would gladly have acquiesced in a system of external toleration —that is, she had no desire to conquer the Romanist states; and her religious settlement, her *Via Media*, was—in the circumstances of the time—practically a system of *internal* toleration too. But then, it has to be admitted, hers was the weaker side, and the weak are always in favour of toleration. Nevertheless, allowing for this factor, any inquirer can see that Queen Elizabeth by nature inclined to tolerance. She was the kind of person called in France a *Politique*.

As representing the weaker party in this terrific religious-political struggle of peoples which was opening, Elizabeth had to adopt a course of extreme caution, and not until nearly thirty years of her reign had passed did she have to face the full force of a Spanish onslaught. Another fifteen years, and command of the sea had passed from Spain to England: this was the real revolution, the big political change, of the last half of the sixteenth century.

> No more decisive event has occurred during the history of the last four hundred years than the sudden rise of the naval power of England during the sixteenth century; and no event remains, at any rate for the general reader, more obscure in its origin.[1]

The writer of this passage ascribes this novel revolution to one thing, the union of the muzzle-loading battery gun, throwing a shot capable at a range of fifty yards of piercing four feet of timber, with the mediæval sailing merchantman specially strengthened for the purpose. There is some ground for believing that Henry VIII. was the designer, or one of the designers, of this kind of ship. His interest in the navy is unquestionable. In the Pepysian Library at Magdalene College, Cambridge, there is a magnificent list of Henry's ships with inventories of equipment, illustrated, called the Anthony Roll (Anthony being the king's

[1] J. D. Upcott, *Three Voyages of Drake* (1936), p. ix.

naval secretary); it shows the early strength of the Tudor navy. The persecutions in the reign of Mary seem further to have turned the minds of the Reformed burgesses and yeomen to the open sea, which became, in Froude's words, the "sea-cradle of the Reformation." From the earliest years of Queen Elizabeth's reign, there was not only active sea-commerce, but a good deal of "adventuring" overseas, with the purpose of discovering new land and finding precious metals, furs, spices; not until the latter half of the reign was the idea of colonisation seriously taken up by Walter Raleigh. About Queen Elizabeth's interest in the sea there is no doubt at all. She kept abreast of the doings of the great mariners, and she gave advice in regard to the initiation of their enterprises.

Monopolism is at the bottom of many industrial troubles. Spain, by right of discovery (1492), of a bull of Pope Alexander VI. (1493), and of partial occupation, monopolised North and South America, or, as they were called, the "Indies." Unfair competition is unfortunately the rule in international trade: governments do all they can artificially to hamper trade of "foreigners." The result of Spain's monopolistic policy was a steady effort of the English to circumvent or to ignore Spanish protectionism.

The Royal Navy at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign comprised twenty-eight ships, and did not greatly increase in the next fifty years. Privately owned shipping, however, was increasing all the time; and the distinction of privateer from merchantman was seldom clear. The country gentry and burgesses of the southern counties and of the west country were investing in shipping ventures, forming syndicates for a single voyage, and dividing the proceeds *pro rata* when the ship or ships returned. Queen Elizabeth frequently lent a royal ship to accompany a private trading expedition.

The Spanish navy could not maintain a cordon of ships along all the coasts insular and continental of Spanish America; and the Spanish colonists themselves were not unwilling to accept goods borne in English ships, and sold advantageously to both parties, contrary to the law of Spain. From the first years of Queen Elizabeth's reign the Spanish monopoly was being infringed all the time. English ships fought Spanish ships, although the English and Spanish crowns were at peace. The fighting was fierce, and each side levelled charges of cruelty and bad faith against the other. The Spaniards call the reputation for cruelty and intolerance which the English fixed upon them the *Black Legend*. The English sailors had a reputation for ruthlessness which was not altogether unjustified. John Hawkins of Plymouth began in 1562 the "triangular" trade from England to West Africa, from there to America, and thence home: this trade between West Africa and America was in slaves. In his voyage of 1564–65 Hawkins was accompanied by his cousin Francis Drake, belonging to a Devon family which had moved to Kent. Hawkins's third expedition,

1567, in which Drake also took part, had the loan of two royal ships; and the crown, naturally, would share in any profit from the venture. It was a bad failure, however, for the Spaniards attacked the English at Vera Cruz, Mexico, and Hawkins lost a large number of his men and one ship. He arrived back in Plymouth Sound in January 1569, after fifteen months at sea. A false rumour of his death at the hands of the Spaniards had preceded him, and Elizabeth had, as a reprisal, seized £150,000 worth of Spanish treasure in ships which, on their way to the Netherlands, had been forced by stress of weather to take refuge at Plymouth and Southampton.[1] Still Philip of Spain did not go to war. In 1572 some Protestant Dutch freebooters (the "Sea Beggars") found shelter in Dover; thence they made a descent, with Elizabeth's knowledge and assistance, upon the port of Brill, in Flushing (1st April), and began that great insurrection which eventually destroyed Spanish dominance in the northern provinces of the Netherlands and founded the Dutch Republic. Elizabeth had now to choose whether she would preserve the Anglo-Spanish alliance which still nominally remained in being since Mary's reign, or would make common cause with the Dutch.

In 1573 Drake led an expedition to the West Indies, landed on the Isthmus of Panama, proceeded inland, and from a high tree saw the shining Pacific Ocean. In 1575 John Oxenham crossed the Isthmus with his men, built a pinnace on the western shore, sailed upon the Pacific and raided Spanish ships, but was captured and hanged at Lima, in Peru, by the Spanish Viceroy. In 1577 Drake started from Plymouth on his "Wonderful Voyage" with five ships and 164 gentlemen and sailors. The object of the expedition, which was not divulged to the public, seems to have been not simply plunder, but also the occupation of North America, from California to Florida, for a great English colony[2]—a design which came to nothing at the time. It is not known if Elizabeth invested any money in the venture, but she shared in the profits. The immortal story of this Circumnavigation of the Globe can be read in the *Voyages and Discoveries* which Richard Hakluyt, Canon of Bristol, published in 1599. The voyage took from 15th November 1577 to 20th September 1580, when the *Golden Hind* dropped anchor again in Plymouth Sound. The Spanish ambassador, Mendoza, demanded that the plunder (mainly silver ingots) be restored to the crown of Spain, and Burleigh advised the queen to agree to this. Elizabeth not only refused. She gave Francis Drake £20,000 out of the royal share of the treasure, invited him to court, and in 1581 had the *Golden Hind* brought round to Deptford and she knighted Drake on its quarter-deck. The total value of the booty which the *Golden Hind* brought back from the great voyage was said to be £1,500,000.

[1] The treasure was 450,000 Spanish ducats, each equal to 6s. 8d.: Pollard, *op. cit.* p. 285.
[2] J. B. Black, *The Reign of Elizabeth*, p. 209.

The queen had made up her mind before this, and had taken action, to support the Dutch. In 1577 she agreed to lend £100,000 to them. Fighting under commissions from their leader, William I., Sovereign Prince of Orange, the Dutch had a sort of status a little better than that of mere rebels. There was a design to make the Duke of Alençon, youngest son of Catherine de Medici, sovereign of the Netherlands. Alençon, as early as 1572, when he was eighteen and Elizabeth thirty-nine, had been proposed as husband of the queen, and this amazing project was still afoot in 1577; indeed, it went on until Alençon's death in 1584 after he had unsuccessfully led an "unofficial" French expedition into the Netherlands.

Elizabeth's money given to the Netherlands (amounting in the end to the substantial total of some £818,000) helped to keep the Netherlands revolt alive, but no more. By May 1579 the Spanish governor, the Duke of Parma, Philip II.'s best general and diplomatist, had regained all the "Belgic" Netherlands; the rest, the Seven Northern Provinces, formed the Union of Utrecht, constituting the "United Netherlands." A desperate and long-drawn-out rebellion in Ireland was draining away much of Elizabeth's resources. In 1580 Philip II. conquered Portugal, and thus did not only unite the whole peninsula under his crown (with a grand naval base at Lisbon), but added Brazil to his empire. In this year Alençon (called Anjou since his brother the Duke of Anjou became Henry III. in 1574) was recognised by the insurgent Dutch as sovereign of the United Netherlands. He came to England, and was received by Elizabeth in Richmond Palace. She kissed him, and exchanged rings in the presence of the French ambassador to whom she said: "You may write this to the king, that the Duke of Anjou shall be my husband." It was after this that he led his ill-starred expedition into the Netherlands. He was ugly, marked with the small-pox, and in character not lovable. In the same year as he died, 1584, William of Orange (the Silent) the heroic, constant, self-sacrificing leader of the Dutch, was assassinated at Delft by a man for the sake of the price which Philip II. had set on William's head. The Dutch were now at the end of their resources. They offered the sovereignty of the Netherlands to Elizabeth, but she declined, not very definitely, as her way was. It was not until this year, 1584, that diplomatic relations between England and Spain were severed; after the discovery of the Throckmorton Plot (1583), the Spanish ambassador was ordered by Elizabeth to leave the country (January 1584). At last Elizabeth made a treaty with the Dutch (10th August 1585), undertaking to send an army to the Netherlands, and to receive the towns of Flushing, Brill, and Rammekens as security for her expenses. There followed the fine expedition led by the Earl of Leicester, 6000 foot, 1000 horse, badly managed by the earl, miserable and inglorious, though still remembered for the heroic death, on 17th October 1586, of Philip Sidney, after a wound received at the battle of Zutphen.

The Leicester expedition to the Netherlands, 1585–86, and the execution of Mary Queen of Scots, made war with Spain certain. The one thing which made Philip hesitate previously to this was that if he were well rid of Elizabeth, he would only place Mary—practically a French princess—on the throne of England. Her execution removed this difficulty. Philip was at liberty to conquer England for the Pope and for himself: if he refrained from doing this, the Protestant James VI. of Scotland would ascend the English throne. Queen Elizabeth and her very sage advisers Burleigh and Walsingham must have foreseen all this, and presumably they were prepared to face it. In 1587 Philip was concentrating a fleet in Cadiz. Suddenly Drake appeared (19th April) off the port with forty-two sail, and attacked and destroyed thirty-two of the Spanish ships. This "singeing of the King of Spain's beard" delayed the sailing of the *Great Armada* for a year.

The danger was formidable enough, but Elizabeth was not a rash woman. The Duke of Parma, certainly a good judge, thought that the chances were in favour of the English. The part assigned to Parma was to be picked up with his army by the Armada at Gravelines and to land in England. The plan was perfectly well understood all over Western Europe. "The affair is so public," Parma wrote to Philip, "that I can assure your Majesty that there is not a soldier but has something to say about it." He warned Philip it might end in disaster and he advised making terms with Elizabeth. Philip gave command of the Armada to the Duke of Medina Sidonia, not a sailor, nor a soldier. He had, however, excellent naval officers under him. He set sail from Lisbon on 19th May 1588, with 137 ships, and went out down the Tagus. "The wind was light, and falling towards a calm; the great galleons drifted with the tide on the purple water, the long streamers trailing from the trucks, the red crosses, the emblems of the crusade, shining bright upon the hanging sails."[1] There were 20,000 soldiers aboard—far too many for the decks of a fighting fleet—and perhaps 20,000 more were waiting with their transports at Gravelines.

As the Armada drew near to England, Elizabeth was not at all dismayed. The land forces—militia and volunteer companies—were organised in two armies, one at St James's, the other at Tilbury. They were not needed, for the Armada was crippled and dispersed in a nine-days' fight along the waters of the Channel, 21st to 29th July. The English Fleet based on Plymouth had been adequately prepared. It was commanded entirely by professional seamen, from Admiral Lord Howard of Effingham downwards. If he had only 90 ships against the Spanish 137, yet his five biggest ships were as big as anything in Medina Sidonia's fleet, and his total gunfire was at least equal to the Spaniard's. Howard and Drake were aided by the weather. Victories are not gained by miracles, nor is any race always bound to win. The English

[1] Froude, *History of England*, xii. p. 388.

The Ditchley Portrait.
Unknown Artist.

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The National Portrait Gallery.

ELIZABETH.

fleet was better "found," better led, and fought in more favourable position and wind. The Spanish ships were drawn down the Channel, harried and burned by fireships when they came to rest, hunted up the North Sea. Had the English ships been provisioned for a long voyage they would have followed the Spanish ships farther; the storms, in any case, finished off their work. What was left of the Armada reached Spain in late September.

The turning-point in the great expedition had been the action off Gravelines, 29th July, when English fireships destroyed six Spanish vessels, and disorganised a fleet of brave men, sick, wounded, hungry, short of water, short of powder. After this, Medina Sidonia's only object was to save his surviving ships and take them home. There remained, of course, the danger that Parma's army might slip over in its transports while the English fleet was looking after the Armada; so the English army was still kept in being at Tilbury. On 9th August Queen Elizabeth, mounted on a horse, reviewed the army there and made a speech:

> "My loving People, we have been persuaded by some who are careful of our safety, to take heed how we commit ourselves to armed multitudes, for fear of treachery; but I assure you, I do not desire to live to distrust my loving and faithful people.
>
> "Let tyrants fear; I have always so behaved myself that, under God, I have placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and good will of my subjects, and therefore I am come amongst you, as you see, at this time, not for my recreation and disport, but being resolved in the midst and heat of the battle, to live or die amongst you all, to lay down for my God and for my kingdoms, and for my people, my honour and my blood even in the dust. I know I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman; but I have the heart and stomach of a King, *and of a King of England too*; and think foul scorn that Parma or Spain or any prince of Europe should dare to invade the borders of my realm, to which rather than any dishonour should grow by me, I myself will take up arms. I myself will be your General, Judge, and rewarder of every one of your virtues in the field."

At dinner that day news arrived that Parma was going to come out from his port. The queen at once declared that she would not leave Tilbury as long as the Spanish army was likely to come. Soon it became clear that all danger was practically over. Charges were mounting up, so Elizabeth, with what some people thought risky haste, ordered sailors and soldiers to be discharged.

After this the English were on the offensive. In 1589 an expedition with Drake in command of the ships and Sir John Norris in command of the soldiers captured Corunna. Norris marched his men through the north of Portugal, hoping to raise a rebellion against Philip. Drake picked him up at Cascaes and sailed back to Plymouth. In 1591 Lord Thomas Howard took an expedition to the Azores; it was in the course of this expedition that Richard Grenville, with the single ship *Revenge*, fought a fleet of 53 Spanish ships for fifteen hours. After he was wounded and dying the survivors of his crew surrendered the

ship. The English were now turning the tables upon the Spaniards everywhere. In 1589 Henry III., the last Valois king, had been assassinated, and Henry of Navarre, Henry IV., became King of France. He was a Huguenot (though he was converted five years later), and had all the Guise party—the " Catholic League "—and also Spain against him. Queen Elizabeth promptly gave assistance to the new French king. She sent a subsidy of £20,000 and an expeditionary force under Lord Willoughby. It was wonderful what Elizabeth did with the crown's income of £300,000 a year. The queen followed the fortunes —which were happy—of Willoughby and his men in France, and sent him rousing letters of congratulation and encouragement. The English and French remained in alliance until Henry IV., victorious, ended the Spanish War by the Treaty of Vervins, 1598. This put an end to land operations ; but Elizabeth's sailors went on battering Spain at sea until the end of her reign.

CHAPTER XIII

THE SUNSET OF THE TUDOR AGE

THE COURT OF the great queen was as brilliant as the sovereign. There were wise counsellors—Burghley, Walsingham, Nicholas Bacon; poets and men of letters—Sidney (killed in the Netherlands), Spenser, Shakespeare, not a courtier, but a famous actor " commanded " by the queen; soldiers, sailors, colonisers, though no permanent colony was founded—a type of these men was Raleigh; and there were brilliant, often extravagant, wilful noblemen, against whom Burghley warned the queen, such as Essex.

The queen was fond of walking, riding, dancing, music, and singing, and she liked, quite naturally, to have beautiful maids of honour, and brilliant men to make a court. Never was there a more cultured circle, nor a manlier. Men and women spoke in the homely accent of their county, but they read French and Italian, could sing part-songs, and wrote, many of them, admirable prose and poetry. Pages and gentlemen-in-waiting would take a compact little volume of Horace or Xenophon out of their pocket to while away hours of attendance in antechambers.

Walter Raleigh was one of the most talented and " all-round " Elizabethans in an age when one man could play many parts. He was born in 1552 near Budleigh Salterton and was educated at a local grammar-school. At fourteen he entered Oriel College, Oxford, and resided three years. At seventeen he was a volunteer serving in France, and fought on the Huguenots' side at Jarnac and Moncontour. He read law in London. In 1578 he went on an expedition with his half-brother, Sir Humphrey Gilbert—one of the customary Elizabethan raids—to the Azores. In 1580 he commanded a company of foot in the war against the Irish rebels. In 1581 he was introduced at court through bringing dispatches from Ireland to Greenwich Palace. The queen was attracted by this handsome, versatile, active young man, and he could scarcely avoid falling in love with her. He is said to have scratched on a window panel:

Fain would I climb, yet fear I to fall.

The queen is said to have seen this and herself to have scratched the answer:

If thy heart fail thee, climb not at all.

Raleigh did not aspire to Queen Elizabeth's hand, but he was welcomed at her court for the next ten years, in the intervals between seafaring or cam-

paigning in Ireland. This marvellous man—but he was by no means the only one of his type in this marvellous age—studied geography and natural history, made schemes for colonies in the new world, wrote history, poetry, philosophy. In 1585 he fitted out an expedition, put his own money into it, induced his friends to subscribe, gave his cousin, Richard Grenville, the command, and sent the expedition out to found Virginia. The colony failed, but the survivors brought back tobacco which Raleigh himself started using. The colony was refounded early in the next reign (1606). When the Armada began its voyage against England, Raleigh was in Ireland, superintending the colonising of Munster, but he hastened back to Devon in time to be one of Lord Howard's captains. He went with Drake and Norris on the expedition to Spain and Portugal in 1589, returned to his south Irish estate after that, at Youghal, and exchanged and read poetry with his neighbour Edmund Spenser, and planted tobacco in his garden; and he wrote a magnificent account in prose of the last fight of his cousin, Sir Richard Grenville, in the *Revenge* off the Azores. He attended Elizabeth's court, too, from time to time, but in 1592 his days as a courtier ended: the queen had him confined to the Tower for intriguing with one of her maids of honour, Bessie Throckmorton, whom he married. Soon the queen let him retire to his manor of Sherborne in Dorset. There he lived happily with his wife; but in 1595 he was off again, with five ships, exploring the coasts of Trinidad and the Orinoco river. After his return he published his *Discovery of the Empire of Guiana*. In 1596 he, Lord Howard, and Lord Essex led an expedition against Cadiz which sailed into the harbour, destroying the Spanish ships and preventing a new Armada from sailing against England. This was perhaps the most dashing exploit of the dashing Elizabethans. Raleigh was now captain of the Queen's Guard at court. In 1597 he and Essex went on an unfortunate naval campaign to the Azores, called the Islands Expedition; by this time the two commanders, never really friendly, were openly at loggerheads with each other. Queen Elizabeth made Raleigh governor of Jersey in 1600, and there he remained, except for attendance at the House of Commons during it short sessions, for the rest of the reign.

There were a good many men of Raleigh's type—romantic, adventurous, scholarly, artistic—at the queen's court, though few, if any, had genius like his. Yet Essex had something like genius too, though unsteady, fitful. He came of an old Herefordshire family, and was born in 1567. With the astonishing precocity of the Elizabethan boys of the landed class, he went to Trinity College, Cambridge, at the age of nine, and graduated M.A. when he was thirteen. His first coming to court was when he was ten years old. Handsome, impulsive, generous, valiant, Essex (he had succeeded to his father's title in 1576) was "irresistible." In 1585–86 he went with his stepfather, the Earl of Leicester, on the campaign in Holland, and did brilliant service at Zutphen, where the ever-to-

be-lamented Philip Sidney lost his life. Queen Elizabeth delighted in the brilliant youth's company, kept him at court, made him Master of the Horse, a Knight of the Garter, played cards with him till the small hours of the morning. Yet he angered her too by his wilfulness, his readiness to take offence, his challenging of other courtiers to duels. He was wounded in 1588 in a duel with another young gallant, Sir Charles Blount. When she heard of this the queen, in her vigorous way, remarked: "God's death! It was fit that some one or other should take him down and teach him better manners, otherwise there will be no rule with him." If there was an expedition afoot, Essex would throw up his duties at court, to the inconvenience and annoyance of Elizabeth, and go off secretly at his own charges (very heavy charges) to serve in it. So he went with Drake and Norris and Raleigh to Corunna in 1589. And from all his expeditions he returned to the angry queen, more or less whole in skin, having performed most gallant deeds, impenitent, and deep and deeper in debt. In 1591–92 much against her will, Elizabeth allowed him, apparently on Burleigh's advice, to be put in command of the small army which she was sending to the help of Henry IV. of France against the Catholic League and Spaniards. Essex met the equally dashing (but more sensible) Henry IV. and his men in a leaping match, and overleapt them all; but he only wasted men in rash fighting. Elizabeth angrily ordered him home. His expedition with Raleigh and Howard to Cadiz in 1596 was a great success, but the Islands Expedition of 1597 was a dismal failure, largely through his own fault. Burghley, Elizabeth's sagest counsellor, was now old and gouty, and was bringing forward his second son Robert (the eldest son was no statesman) to take his place as Secretary of State. Essex seems to have opposed this with Elizabeth. Besides Robert Cecil there was another cool and highly efficient young man, the son of another of Elizabeth's old servants. Francis Bacon was the second son of Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper, who died in 1576. Francis, after a brilliant career at Trinity College, Cambridge, had studied law at Gray's Inn and made a great career at the Bar. He studied science and wrote on philosophy (in Latin), was Member of Parliament for Middlesex. In 1593, Essex, who showed friendship to him, tried to secure the Attorney-Generalship for him, unsuccessfully. He continued to combine the practice of the law with philosophy and literature, and published in 1597 the *Essays*, of perfect Elizabethan terse language and mature wisdom. To console him for missing the Attorney-Generalship the generous Essex presented Bacon with some property at Twickenham.

After the Islands Expedition of 1597 the queen found Essex as difficult to handle as ever, although she was still fond of him, still under his charm. She even made him Earl Marshal of England. In July 1598 the queen, Essex, Robert Cecil, and the Earl of Nottingham were in council about the rebellion—which had gone on intermittently for about thirty years—in Ireland. Essex

disputed with her over the question of appointing a new commander or Lord Deputy; despite his high position and experience he lost his temper, blazed forth at the queen, and turned his back on her. This was too much for Elizabeth, who had a temper of her own, though she could keep it in hand. She boxed the earl on the ears and told him to "Be gone and be hanged." The earl is said to have put his hand to his sword and Nottingham hastily thrust himself between him and the queen.

Burghley died on 8th August 1598, at the age of seventy-eight. Perhaps the removal of this sage counsellor, whom Robert Cecil did not wholly replace, accounts for Elizabeth's generous but unwise act, after forgiving Essex, in sending the Earl to command against the rebellion of Hugh O'Neil. Essex was eager for military work, and besought her to appoint him. On 27th March 1599 he rode out of London on the way to Chester and Ireland. He made one ruinous campaign into Leinster and Munster, having been instructed by Elizabeth to operate in Ulster. When he marched back, a bad failure, to Dublin, he received —very properly—a letter of sharp reprimand from the queen. Thereupon he did seek out the rebel O'Neil—only to make a truce (and possibly a plot against the English Crown) with him. On 24th September 1599, after six months in Ireland, he left suddenly for England.

From London Essex hastened on to the Court which was at Nonsuch and burst into Elizabeth's bedroom as her ladies were dressing her. The queen kept her head, received him calmly and kindly; but that night she had him put under arrest. He was kept, in pleasant quarters, in the house of Lord Keeper Egerton for nearly six months. Later, in 1600, however, he was allowed to go quite free. He was now simply overwhelmed with debt, although he had received in various appointments from the queen £300,000 in the last ten or twelve years. In February 1601, the desperate man, from his house in London, Essex House, planned to raise the citizens and seize the Tower. He was arrested (8th February 1601), tried and convicted by his peers, and was beheaded, privately at his request, in the courtyard of the Tower on 25th February, aged thirty-four. His wife was daughter of Secretary Walsingham, widow of Philip Sidney, and their son was one of the leading, though not most successful, parliamentary generals in the Great Rebellion against Charles I.

The great queen was now the *doyen* of European monarchs. Her reputation among her own people, and in foreign parts, surpassed that of any of her contemporaries. Surrounded by experienced counsellors, safe by land and sea in a world still rocking under the "Catholic Reaction," she could look out in her declining years on a prosperous and happy people. Not that they were altogether contented. Her last parliament met in November 1601, and soon there was a regular storm in the House of Commons over the grievance of trading and manufacturing monopolies, granted to courtiers and farmed out by them at

extortionate prices. There were a lot of " Puritans " in this House and they were stiff-necked people. Queen Elizabeth, however, met them when they came on a deputation to Whitehall, with a touching speech. She thanked them for letting her know of the troubles of her subjects : " Had I not received knowledge from you, I might have fallen into the lapse of an error, only for want of true information . . . That my grants shall be made grievous to my people, and oppressors be privileged under colour of our patents, our princely dignity shall not suffer. When I heard it, I could give no rest unto my thoughts until I had reformed it." There may have been mightier and wiser princes in England—" yet you never had, nor shall have, any that will love you better." This ended the monopolies trouble for the rest of the reign.

Elizabeth's health remained good almost to the very end. Though occasionally suffering from the depression of old age, she was as a rule cheerful and equable. Robert Cary, a younger son of Lord Hunsdon, who was related to the queen, saw her often in her last years and became one of her friends. Near the end she called him to her at Richmond Palace. He told her how happy he was to see her in good health. " She took me by the hand and wrung it hard, and said : ' No, Robin, I am not well.' " [1] They talked for some time, but she often sighed. " I was grieved," he writes, " to see her in this plight ; for in all my lifetime before, I never knew her fetch a sigh but when the queen was beheaded." Cary continues a page or two later : " On Wednesday, the twenty-third of March, she grew speechless. That afternoon, by signs, she called for her council, and by putting her hand to her head, when the King of Scots was named to her, they all knew he was the man she desired should reign after her." Cary saw her that night, still speechless, but directing the old Archbishop of Canterbury, John Whitgift, to pray at her bedside. She died that night between two and three in the morning, 24th March 1603.

[1] *Memoirs of Robert Carey*, edited Powell (1905), pp. 70–75.

CHAPTER XIV

GOD'S SILLY VASSAL

THE ACCESSION OF the House of Stuart to the throne of England began a period of eighty-eight years which on its political side was simply a long-drawn-out quarrel of crown and parliament. Naturally, people were not conscious of this all the time, for the seventeenth century was many-sided, and the English people had enthralling interests—literary, dramatic, colonial, economic; they were not thinking about politics all the time. Nevertheless, the political quarrel was very persistent, embittered. Where the Tudor monarchs had been particularly successful, the Stuart monarchs conspicuously failed. Doubtless there were faults on the side of parliament, especially among the country gentry and burgesses of the House of Commons. All those faults, however, had been there under the Tudors, at any rate in the reign of Queen Elizabeth; and yet crown and parliament did not quarrel.

James the Sixth of Scotland and the First of England was born on 19th June 1566 at Edinburgh Castle, the son of Queen Mary and King Henry Lord Darnley. After the murder of Lord Darnley, James was proclaimed King of Scots on 29th July 1567. A succession of Regents—the Earls of Moray, Lennox, Mar, Morton—managed the kingdom for him. Living mainly in Stirling Castle, he was given a good education by the famous Scottish "Humanist," George Buchanan. From 1581 James ruled the kingdom himself. He had tendencies towards autocracy, at the same time relying greatly upon personal friends, not always entirely worthy men, whom people grumbled at as "favourites." From 1586 he was in alliance with Queen Elizabeth and in receipt of an English pension of £4000 a year. The Scots parliament was not very powerful, but the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church was extremely influential. James fancied himself to be a theologian and liked learned arguments with the Presbyterian divines; not that he had any love for them, but he liked confuting their pretensions. His preference in religion was for Episcopacy, and in 1600 he managed to establish some bishoprics in Scotland. When he succeeded Elizabeth and came to England he roundly declared to the Puritan divines at the Hampton Court Conference (1604): "Presbytery agreeth with King, as well as God with Devil." Queen Elizabeth, though she never met him, had much diplomatic correspondence with him, not always to her taste. Once she broke out on reading or hearing about him: "What must I look for from such a double-tongued scoundrel as this?" This, of course, was just Elizabeth's vigorous

way of speaking. James was not a bad sort of man, though pedantic and vainglorious. Reading and discussing and writing were not his only tastes, for he was passionately fond of hunting. It was apparently the Duc de Sully, not Henry IV., who called him the wisest fool in Christendom.

When Robert Cary, who was Warden of the Middle March, heard at London on 24th March 1603 that Queen Elizabeth was dead, he took horse at once and rode to the Border. He gave orders to his deputies to proclaim James King of England at Witherington, Morpeth, and Alnwick. At Norham, about midday on 26th March, he had a fall and his horse kicked him on the head: "It made me so weak," he wrote, "that I was forced to ride a soft pace after." Nevertheless he reached Holyroodhouse, Edinburgh, that night; found James abed, and saluted him as King of England, France, and Ireland.[1] He had ridden over 400 miles in three days. The King was not equally expeditious. He made a leisurely dignified journey, occupying about a month, to his new capital. On the way he was entertained at Theobalds, the late Burghley's great house in Hertfordshire. Robert Cecil now owned it. James must have liked the place, for a few years later he exchanged the royal residence of Hatfield for it. Cecil, who had become Earl of Salisbury, then built the present magnificent mansion of brick (1611).

After arriving in April 1603 in London, and setting up his court at Whitehall, James had the unpleasant experience of being conspired against. This was not a new experience, as he had lived amid plots among the fierce Scots nobility, and had suffered capture and detention. This time there were two simultaneous plots, the Main Plot, with the object, apparently, of placing James's cousin Arabella Stuart on the throne; and the Bye Plot, with the object of gaining toleration for Roman Catholics. Secretly Cecil knew all about both plots.

The conspirators were arrested and convicted, but though condemned to death, most of them were pardoned by James, the sentence being reduced to imprisonment. Raleigh, implicated in the Main Plot, was put in the Tower, where he wrote his *History of the World*.

In dealing with the plotters, James showed himself to be magnanimous and tolerant, if rather tedious (for he took a tremendously long time to explain his reasons), but in the Hampton Court Conference he was not tolerant at all. Queen Elizabeth's *Via Media Anglicana* satisfied the bulk of the people only for a time. The Roman Catholics never really accepted it; and after 1563 there was something like a Roman invasion, usually secret. After Pope Pius sent out his bull of excommunication against Elizabeth, parliament naturally legislated to protect England from Roman penetration. In 1581, Edward Campion, a Jesuit priest, was racked and executed for treason on quite insufficient evidence. Campion was a mild, saintly man, no traitor. On James's accession the Bye

[1] *Memoirs of Robert Carey*, pp. 77–78.

Plot showed that the Roman Catholics had become dangerous; yet he was not unwilling to be tolerant towards them, partly perhaps because his queen, the Danish princess Anne, had secretly become a Roman Catholic.

Besides the Roman Catholics, however, the Puritans had become restive under the Elizabethan *Via Media*. The Puritans are perhaps best described as "Evangelical," and they might be English churchmen, Presbyterians, or Independents. Edmund Grindal, Elizabeth's second Archbishop of Canterbury, was himself a Puritan. Thomas Cartwright, Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at Cambridge in 1570 was the leading presbyterian theologian. Robert Browne, who had been a chaplain to the Duke of Norfolk, was the leader of the Independents (or Congregationalists) about 1580.

Shortly after James came to the throne, he received a Millenary Petition, said to represent the views of one thousand Puritans, clergy and laity. The petition asked for the suppression of certain alleged "Popish" practices and expressions in the church services. Moved by this the King had a conference summoned at Hampton Court: nine bishops, four Puritan clergy, with Secretary Cecil and Lords of the Council (January 1604). James sat and disputed and declared his opinions: "I approve the calling and the use of the bishops in the church, and it is my aphorism: No bishop, no king." He approved of a proposal that the Bible be new translated. "I profess," James declared, "I could never yet see a Bible well translated in English." The result of the proposal was the Authorised Version or King's Bible. About presbytery the king showed, surprisingly, no disposition to argue. "If you aim at a Scottish Presbytery, it agreeth with monarchy as God with devil. Then Jack and Tom and Will and Dick shall meet and censure me and my council." He fell into a towering rage, rose, touched his hat, turned to the Puritans and said: "If this be all your party hath to say, I will make them conform themselves or else I will harry them out of the land or else do worse." Thereupon he left the room. This occasion seems to me the origin of the Great Civil War.

The parliamentary history of the reign shows the constant, though at first small but increasing, rift between crown and people. The first parliament met in 1604, and there was a dispute over freedom of election of the House of Commons because James had interfered with the elections. In his proclamation convoking parliament he had stated: "We do command that no bankrupts or outlaws be chosen." He had further charged the sheriffs not to direct a writ to any ancient town being so minded that there were not sufficient residents to make an election. This seems to be a very reasonable proclamation. When an outlaw, Sir Francis Goodwin was elected for Buckinghamshire, and the sheriff returned the writ of election to the Chancery, James had the writ rejected—again, a reasonable act: but a gross interference with the Commons' privilege which is to be judge of the elections to their own House.

It was the custom for parliament to sit only for a few weeks in each year, and it had been usual to dissolve it altogether at the end of the session—not always however: Henry VIII.'s "Reformation Parliament" had come up to London year after year from 1529 to 1536. James I.'s first parliament had a second session in 1605 in which they voted him quite a liberal subsidy, the first in his reign. He required it, for the Spanish war (which James had hastened to end as soon as he came to the throne by the Treaty of London 1604) left an Elizabethan debt of £400,000. There was a third session in 1606, in which James put forward another of his excellent plans: this one was for a complete union of England and Scotland. It went forward, however, so slowly that he went and addressed the two Houses in person, but not in the gracious way that Queen Elizabeth had done. He threatened to live alternately in the two kingdoms and to keep his court at York (not bad ideas), and he referred somewhat bitterly to the tone of the speeches which seemed to reflect on himself and the Scottish people: "I looked for no such fruits at your hands, such personal discourses and speeches, which, of all other, I looked you should avoid, as not beseeming the gravity of your assembly. I am your king: I am placed to govern you, and shall answer for your errors. I am a man of flesh and blood and have my passions and affections as other men. I pray you, do not too far move me to do that which my power may tempt me into." All this meant really bad relations between king and parliament, and the House of Commons presented a list of no less than sixteen articles of grievances. James was not sympathetic towards these grievances, among which was mildness in the enforcement of the penal laws against Roman Catholics. Even the plot (5th November 1605) of a band of desperate Romanists to blow up the king and Houses of Parliament by means of an English soldier drawn from the Spanish army, Guy Fawkes, did not shake James's faith in reasonableness and toleration. Another session of parliament in 1607 did little to improve the relations between crown and parliament. A bill for union with Scotland was rejected; some remedy was obtained through common law, Chief Justice Coke deciding in the case of a certain Calvin or Colvin that Scotsmen born since the king's accession to the English throne should enjoy in England the rights of English subjects. Crown and parliament went on bickering over money, particularly in regard to the case of a Turkey merchant called Bates who in 1606 refused to pay enhanced rates on imported currants. The judges decided adversely to Bates on the ground that the crown, through its prerogative power, could vary customs-duties. The crown took advantage of this to issue a new book of rates, naturally increasing the payments. In 1610 a statesmanlike project arranged between Secretary Cecil and the House of Commons for commuting all the feudal dues of the crown for a fixed annual revenue failed because, over a dispute about some other grievances, James suddenly dissolved parliament. This,

" the Great Contract," would, if accepted, have suppressed obsolete payments—wardship, purveyance, primer seisin, aids, escuages, homages, and such—liable, Hallam writes, to become detestable abuses, and at all times a galling burden. They were actually abolished in the reign of Charles II. at a heavy cost. In 1610 James's first parliament was dissolved.

The truth is that the crown was badly in need of money and was not being treated at all handsomely. Elizabeth, an unmarried queen, could scarcely carry on the administration with her revenue of £300,000 a year. It was an age of rising prices, owing to the flow of silver to Europe from the mines of the New World. James was a married man with a family, and could not help having a more expensive court than Elizabeth; with rising prices his revenue was quite insufficient for his needs. In addition he was in some ways inclined to extravagance. A clean liver, he had no mistresses to engulf money in their insatiable maws, but he liked male society and was generous to his friends. On the other hand, he was peaceful, and saved enormous sums of money by stopping the Spanish war in 1604. With careful administration and making every tax give its full yield (never a popular thing to do) Cecil managed to raise the revenue to £600,000 a year, so that in peace-time the government was solvent. The institution of the order of baronets in 1611 for the purpose of selling baronetcies is one of the less defensible Stuart means of finding money.

The second parliament of James I. met in 1614, refused to vote a bill of supply until their grievances in regard to " impositions," that is, increases of customs-duties, should be satisfied. James therefore dissolved it, without any bill at all being passed. It was called the Addled Parliament.

There was no further parliament until 1621, when the third legislature of the reign met in an absolutely uncompromising mood. It impeached the Lord Chancellor Bacon for accepting money in the discharge of his duties, and this great man had to give up the seal. He had, doubtless, accepted presents, though he seems to have been justified in declaring that they did not affect his judgments. This, in any case, was only a minor breeze compared with what followed. The Commons started discussing the crown's foreign policy, which was peaceful, in regard to the religious war in Germany—the " Thirty Years War," begun in 1618. James, like Elizabeth, held obstinately to the view that foreign affairs were strictly and exclusively within the crown's prerogative, and he plainly said so. The Commons thereupon voted a " protestation " to the effect that to discuss affairs of state, defence of the realm, the church, was one of their privileges and liberties, their undoubted birthright and inheritance. James in anger, with his own hands, tore the leaves of the protestation out of the journals of the House. Parliament was dissolved, and Coke, Pym, Selden, and two other members were imprisoned for words spoken in the House. This was held by the Commons to be flagrant violation of privilege of parliament.

James had one more parliament, his fourth, in 1624. The evil of monopolies granted to courtiers had grown up again, since Queen Elizabeth so gracefully agreed to give them up in 1601. This time they were abolished by Act of Parliament. For once the relations of crown and parliament were fairly good, though not for a very good reason. The Commons had worked themselves up to demand war against Spain, and James, who must have felt like Walpole later, that they would wring their hands who now were ringing bells, consented. Supplies were now generously voted.

The king's management of foreign affairs was almost as unfortunate as his management of parliament. The Anglo-Spanish peace-treaty of 1604 was an excellent piece of work, for by the time Queen Elizabeth died, the war was outmoded; it had just become a tradition, without rhyme or reason. Henry IV. of France had made his peace with Spain in 1598. The Dutch had not yet made peace because Philip III. (Philip II. died in 1598) would not acknowledge the independence of the United Netherlands. The Dutch, however, were now prepared to carry on their war themselves. They were winning slowly, and were used to a long war, fighting by means of mercenaries, mainly in sieges, and for the most part only in summer. And they seem to have made this kind of limited war pay for itself or at any rate partly pay for itself through trading with their enemy. James would have included them in the peace gladly; he aspired to the blessing of the name of peacemaker. They refused his good offices. Peace was made between England and Spain, and it was agreed that English sailors should not be subjected to the Inquisition so long as they showed no open disrespect. The Spaniards maintained their monopoly of trade with their colonies.

Five years later, in 1609, James I. and Henry IV. were successful in mediating between the Dutch and Spaniards. A truce was made for twelve years: not a definite peace, because the King of Spain still refused to acknowledge explicitly Dutch independence. The Dutch arranged to repay to the English crown the sum of £818,408 advanced by Queen Elizabeth; payment to begin in two years in half-yearly instalments of £30,000. The "Cautionary Towns" held by English troops—Flushing, Brill, and Rammekens—were restored to the Dutch.

So far James had done well in foreign policy; and he was a peacemaker. His next venture was less successful, though perhaps through no fault of his own. On 25th March 1610, the Duke of Cleves—the duchy of the famous fourth wife of Henry VIII.—died without male heirs. His territory, hitherto in Protestant hands, was occupied by the Romanist and reactionary house of Austria. The valley of the Rhine, with the Roman Catholic Prince Archbishops of Mainz, Trier, and Cologne, was already a "Priests' Lane;" the acquisition of the Duchy of Cleves by the Austrian Habsburgs would give the Catholic Reaction the

last Protestant state on the Dutch border. The German Protestant Princes formed a league to oppose this. The energetic Henry IV. of France, a Roman Catholic indeed but an opponent of the Catholic Reaction, and the Dutch, promised help; finally James I., never very forward in a warlike enterprise, agreed to join the alliance. The religious war—which actually came eight years later—seemed certain to break out now; and with Henry IV. organising the alliance and with James now decided to take part (his parliament would require no urging), the war might only have been short and sharp. Henry IV., actually while he was setting forth from Paris, was assassinated, 19th May 1610. The war did not absolutely halt. Dutch and English troops did some fighting on the Lower Rhine until a compromise was arranged, and an uneasy peace went on until 1618.

The year 1612 was the dividing point of the reign. In that year three things happened which affected the course of James I.'s reign. His daughter Elizabeth, aged sixteen, was married at London to Frederick V., Elector Palatine of the Rhine. There had been a proposal to marry her to King Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, which would almost certainly have brought England into the religious war in Germany, but in a powerful alliance and for a cause with at any rate some idealism in it. The Palatine marriage was a Protestant marriage and was popular with the people. The Princess Elizabeth, a high-spirited, charming girl, whose vigorously expressed letters remind the reader of Queen Elizabeth, and the Elector Frederick went off happily to Heidelberg, where for some years they kept a fine court. English travellers and diplomats—Sir Thomas Roe, Sir Henry Wootton—could not speak highly enough of the bearing and bravery of the Princess. The rôle of Protestant hero on the Upper Rhine was, however, too grand for the Elector Frederick. After the opening of the "Thirty Years War" in 1618, Frederick was tempted to seek a crown in Bohemia. His election to the Bohemian throne in 1619 made him and his wife for a brief winter king and queen, and then the battle of the White Hill (outside Prague) sent them on their travels. King James just managed to avoid being involved in a hopeless struggle to maintain his son-in-law and daughter on an indefensible throne in Central Europe.

The second event of 1612 which markedly influenced the future course of events in England was the death of Cecil, James's wisest official, the last of the Elizabethan statesmen. Calm, courteous, hard-working, sagacious, Cecil represented not only Elizabethan statesmanship but the Anglican country squires whose sympathy the Stuart family found it so difficult to gain or keep. Cecil's earthly monument is Hatfield (1611), surely the most impressive example of Tudor-Jacobean domestic architecture, a stately home of a stately family of the governing class.

The third event of 1612 which decided the course of English history was the

Daniel Mytens.

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JAMES I.

death of James I.'s eldest son Prince Henry, aged nineteen years. Perhaps the subsequent misfortunes of the younger brother Charles, who now became heir to the throne, may partly account for the idea that Henry would have been a king congenial to the difficult English of the age. *Dis aliter visum.*

After 1612 came the great act of misjudgment — the Spanish Marriage Project. In that year Don Diego Sarmiento de Acuna, the Count of Gondomar, arrived as Spanish ambassador to the court of James I. When the Addled Parliament met and was dissolved in 1614, Gondomar had a conversation with James in which he seems to have suggested that an alliance with Spain would solve James's parliamentary difficulties—solve them, that is to say, *à la mode d'Espagne,* which would mean doing without parliament. Gondomar proposed that Prince Charles, heir to the English and Scottish thrones, should be betrothed to the Infanta of Spain, the marriage to take-place in four years. Meanwhile, the laws against Roman Catholics in England were to be administratively relaxed. Gondomar calculated that by the time the marriage was to take place, " the Catholic religion will have become so powerful in this country and everything which is unsatisfactory will have improved so much that his Majesty will be able to act with all security and that afterwards it may be that the Prince himself may wish to see Spain and go to be married there, and hear Mass and a sermon in the Church of our Lady of Atocha." Thus it seems that at first the Spanish authorities were serious in projecting the marriage and believing that it could be a means of restoring England and Scotland to the Roman faith. When, however, they saw that this design was only a dream, they still carried on the marriage negotiations as a means of preventing England from joining the Protestant League against them. James, wise as he thought himself to be (and as, in some respects, he was), allowed himself simply to be duped.

Much of the trouble of James's reign came from his warm friendship with one or two courtiers. The first was Robert Carr, a Scotsman, whom the king made Earl of Somerset. By the year 1614, however, Carr had begun to weary the king himself. He had married in 1613 Lady Essex, divorced from her husband the Earl of Essex. In the course of this divorce-marriage affair, Lady Essex had experienced opposition from a friend of Lord Essex, called Sir Thomas Overbury; and she appears to have gone so far as to arrange with an apothecary's boy to give Overbury poisoned tarts. All this happened in 1613. The affair of the tarts was found out in 1615, and there was enough evidence against Carr and his wife to have them both put in the Tower, where they remained until 1622. The unsavoury fall of Carr did not sicken James with personal favourites; it only made room for another. And the whole bad business was made worse by the fact that in 1613 the English ambassador in Madrid, Lord Digby, had managed to obtain a copy of the English pension-list of the King of Spain. Among the names of English notables who had received a Spanish pension was

that of Robert Cecil, the great directing statesman, the professional administrator of the crown from 1603 to 1612. James was so shocked by this revelation that he seems to have resolved to trust henceforth nobody but a personal friend—although the receipt of foreign pensions was a regular practice not incompatible (in Cecil's case quite compatible) with loyalty to the crown.

George Villiers was born in 1592, the second son of Sir George Villiers of Brooksby, a Leicestershire squire. He was brought up by his mother, who had about £50 a year, to be a courtier. With this end he was taught graceful accomplishments, fencing and dancing, but was given little real education. This was not because the gentry of the seventeenth century did not know what education was; most of the country gentry went to grammar schools, college, an Inn of Court. Young Villiers was sent to France further to learn to be a courtier. In 1614 he was introduced to James I., who was at once attracted by this charming and handsome young man of twenty-two. Of course all the courtiers, whose business was to say what was agreeable to the monarch and to see that they were always on the right side, lined themselves by Villiers. He was not made a minister, but honours were heaped upon him; he became Master of the Horse, Viscount Villiers (1616), Earl of Buckingham (1617), Marquis of Buckingham and Lord High Admiral (1618), Duke of Buckingham (1623). In 1620 he married Lady Katherine Manners. He supported the Spanish Marriage Project, because he saw that it was agreeable to the king. His influence became completely dominant, because James, who was becoming more and more sentimentally compliant, made Villiers in effect the dispenser of court patronage. Buckingham was not a bad man, and with a better upbringing could have conferred high service on the state. As Lord High Admiral he took a genuine interest in the Navy. He was a loyal Protestant. He was companion and practically governor to Prince Charles and gained the respect and affection of that upright young man. Thrust, however, into high favour and enormous wealth after a frivolous upbringing, surrounded by the hypocrites and flatterers of a corrupt court, Buckingham, given all his own way by a foolish old man, had a disastrous influence on the course of events.

The " Thirty Years War " in Germany began in 1618 with the " Defenestration of Prague " when Protestant nobles threw out of a window in the Hradschin, Prague's castle-palace, Martinitz and Slawata, ministers of the Emperor Ferdinand II. (elected King of Bohemia in 1617). The next year, 1619, Frederick V., the Elector Palatine, was elected King of Bohemia, expecting, but not receiving, help from James I., who told the Palatine ambassador that Frederick had made his choice and must settle his own business himself. As the Emperor Ferdinand II. was supported by his Spanish Habsburg kinsman, the Spanish Marriage Project proved to be a very handy means of gaining time and keeping England from taking the Protestant-Bohemian side. On 29th

October 1620 the Imperialist Catholic army overthrew the "Winter King" Frederick's forces at the battle of the White Hill. Frederick and his family had to flee to Silesia, the first step in a series of wanderings which brought Queen Elizabeth to refuge in the Netherlands. When news of the battle of the White Hill came to James I. the wise monarch said that he had been expecting it. Public opinion, in effect, the House of Commons, might still have driven James to engage in war at least to preserve for his son-in-law the Palatinate, but the Spanish Marriage Project prevented this. In 1621 the Twelve Years Truce between Spain and the Dutch came to an end, and England might have taken sides with the Dutch—the parliament of 1621 seemed eager for action, though probably only for naval action. The Spanish Marriage Project prevented this too. Finally, on 17th February 1623, Buckingham and Prince Charles (who was twenty-two years old) set out under the names of Tom and John Smith, rode to Dover, crossed to Boulogne, rode to Paris, Bayonne, Madrid, where they arrived on 7th March. They spent some weeks at Madrid. During this time Charles only once met the Infanta, and only by leaping over a garden wall, to her infinite alarm; she fled shrieking. Charles, always a loyal member of the Church of England, steadfastly resisted all attempts at conversion. At last a treaty was signed on 25th July 1623, but never ratified. King James peremptorily ordered them home. On 29th April Charles and Buckingham left Madrid with nothing accomplished, except to know that their project of a Spanish marriage was a delusion. It remains a mystery why they had ever adopted it, and why they persisted in it so long.

The miserable Spanish journey and its ignominious conclusion brought about a complete reversal of the court's policy. Buckingham and Charles were now as eager for defiance of Spain as they had recently been for alliance. On 10th November 1624 a marriage treaty was signed between the English and French crowns, Charles to marry Henrietta Maria (sister of Louis XIII.), a princess whom he had seen when he attended a masque at court on his way through Paris in the previous year. James's fourth parliament voted supplies for war with Spain, and an expedition of 12,000 men was sent to the German theatre of war under command of a Roman Catholic German soldier of fortune, Count Ernest of Mansfeld. Before this expedition was frittered away to its disastrous end, James I. died, a prematurely old man, 27th March 1625.

In many ways in advance of his time, an advocate of reasonableness in foreign policy and in religious policy, he had totally failed since the death of Cecil to exercise any wholesome influence on the course of events. Himself an uncorrupt man, he let a corrupt court gather around him. People despised his shambling, stuttering manner. He was continually sipping French wine and he ate enormous quantities of fruit; he was never intoxicated; was a good husband and a good father; if he had not been so sentimental over it,

he would have been a good friend. He angered rational people by lecturing them on the " Divine Right " of monarchy ; and his much more sensible idea that kingship was an art and a serious business—kingcraft—was overlooked in the stupid controversy about Divine Right. As a result his influence on the crown was bad, though Macaulay goes too far in declaring : " It was no light thing that, on the very eve of the decisive struggle between our kings and their parliaments, royalty should be exhibited to the world stammering, slobbering, shedding unmanly tears, trembling at a drawn sword, and talking in the style alternately of a buffoon and of a pedagogue." [1] Macaulay forgot that King James was a king-pacificator.

[1] *History of England* (ed. 1873), i. p. 37.

CHAPTER XV

PREROGATIVE AND PARLIAMENT

THE FIRST HALF of the seventeenth century was (as the first half of the twentieth century looks like becoming) a bottle-neck for the previously widely dispersed stream or streams of parliamentarism; and only in Great Britain, the Netherlands, and the Scandinavian monarchies did parliaments survive in any strength. In Spain, France, Russia, parliamentary legislatures were suppressed or died out. In Germany and Austria they never existed except as feudal assemblies of "Estates." In Hungary, where there was a genuine parliament, the Habsburgs reduced it to a shadow. In England parliament all but disappeared; for it was suspended continuously for eleven years, but recovered itself after a great effort which people will bless or curse according as they believe in parliaments or not.

Macaulay's considered judgment is that there was an occasional, but no systematic, opposition in parliament to the crown's policy in the reign of Elizabeth. The reign of James I.—and largely through the mismanagement of James—produced a regular, systematic opposition. On the other hand, his pacific foreign policy had this result, that there was no standing army, as there was in other countries, with which the crown could coerce parliament. "While France, Spain, Italy, Belgium, and Germany swarmed with mercenary soldiers, the defence of our island was still confided to the militia."

In 1625 "the violent Prelatists who were, to a man, zealous for the prerogative, and the violent Puritans who were, to a man, zealous for the privileges of parliament, regarded each other with animosity more intense than that which, in the preceding generation, had existed between Catholics and Protestants." At this time the English people found themselves, after twenty-four years of peace, engaged once more in war with Spain. The normal income of the crown could not suffice for this. "To meet the regular charge of a long war by regular taxation, imposed without the consent of the estates of the realm, was a course which Henry VIII. himself would not have dared to take. It seemed, therefore, that the decisive hour was approaching, and that the English parliament would soon either share the fate of the senates of the Continent or obtain supreme ascendancy in the state." [1]

The prince who came to the throne at this conjuncture was an upright and cultured man. Sir Robert Cary, the man who rode in 1603 to Edinburgh with

[1] Macaulay, *History*, i. pp. 41–42.

the news of Elizabeth's death, and Philip Warwick, Charles's secretary, both say that the king as a boy was delicate. He grew up to be a handsome, well-knit, physically sound man, able to endure prolonged mental and bodily strain, and to be alert and keen to the last. His will was strong, his temper keen and in control. He is accused—it is the common Whig view—of faithlessness. This strongly religious man, loyalest of sons of the Church of England, good friend, husband, father, certainly was not naturally inclined to break a promise. The promises made under the Petition of Right, for instance, would be in his mind conditional on parliament supplying the necessities of the crown. Later again, his intrigues with the Scots, while he was negotiating openly with the parliamentarians, would be defended by himself as a necessity of the war which he considered to have been forced upon him by parliament. It is impossible to deny that Charles was a high-minded man. It is equally impossible to deny that his complete belief in his own rectitude, and also in the Divine Right of the crown to absolute authority, made him unsuitable for dealing with seventeenth-century parliaments. And his advisers were even less suitable: Buckingham, Strafford, Laud.

Buckingham, James I.'s favourite, was by age, temperament, and bearing fitted to be Charles's friend; he was, like the king, handsome, dignified, gallant. He was not, however, fitted to guide a kingdom. The misfortune arising out of their friendship was that for three years Buckingham practically ruled England; and Charles sacrificed his own chances of popularity to defend his friend's incompetent statemanship.

King Charles had five parliaments in all: three in the years 1625–29 and two in 1640–42, when the Great Civil War began. The first parliament in 1625 voted money for the war with Spain (which it wanted to be only a naval war), but took the unusual course of voting tunnage and poundage for one year only, not for the life of the king: this could not but offend Charles. He married the Princess Henrietta Maria of France (June 1625), and a promise of a loan of eight ships was given to Richelieu, the First Minister of Louis XIII. Richelieu used the ships (as Charles foresaw, too late, that they could be used) to reduce the last Huguenot stronghold, La Rochelle. In 1626 parliament refused to grant further supplies and Charles dissolved it: a bad beginning for his reign. Worse than this, the combined naval-military expedition sent against Cadiz in 1626 under command of the Earl of Essex was disastrously mismanaged both in its fitting out and in its operations. The second parliament, that of 1627, naturally called for an inquiry into the Cadiz fiasco. Charles refused, probably because that would involve inquiry into Buckingham's administration as Lord High Admiral. When the Commons, led by Sir Dudley Digges and Sir John Eliot, impeached Buckingham before the House of Lords, Charles quashed the proceedings by dissolving parliament—surely a very unwise proceeding and unlikely

to help Buckingham even if the duke were guilty of malpractices, as seems unlikely.

The Spanish War nominally dragged on until November 1630, although there were no regular naval or military operations. Meanwhile, through astonishing incompetence in Charles's (or Buckingham's) conduct of foreign policy, England, at war with Spain, was involved in war with Spain's enemy France. Furious at the employment by Richelieu of the eight borrowed English ships against the Huguenots of La Rochelle, which was still defending itself in 1627, Charles sent out a relief expedition. There were many Englishmen and Scotsmen with valuable military experience, gained as volunteers in the Thirty Years War in Germany ; any one of these would have been competent leaders of the expedition to Rochelle ; but Charles entrusted it to Buckingham who, though he was Lord High Admiral, had really no naval or military training or experience. As a matter of fact, the duke did far better than was to be expected. This is the finest thing in his life. The troops landed in the Ile de Rhé off La Rochelle, Buckingham leading them in person. He slept on the ground and shared the common men's privations, which were many, for corrupt contractors and ill-trained administrators produced their usual chaos. He was alert, cheerful, courageous, a paladin in adverse circumstances, a leader of men. With a better upbringing and a hardier profession than that of courtier, Buckingham would have had a career of merit and distinction : when it came " to the touch," there was something of the Philip Sidney or Montrose in him. Nevertheless the expedition of 1627 to La Rochelle was a failure. At home its results were disastrous. Charles tried to raise a forced loan of £300,000 to meet the expenses of the expedition and of support of the Protestant cause in Germany, and had five knights imprisoned by warrant of the Privy Council for refusing to lend. The " Five Knights' Case " was argued before the Bench, and the Judges decided that they could not interfere where subjects were committed to prison by special command of the king, *per speciale mandatum regis*, presumably for reasons of state. While this form of royal financial tyranny—for, even if light, that is what it amounted to—was being practised, poor men were being pressed into the military companies for the next expedition to La Rochelle. In these circumstances Charles's third parliament met in 1628.

Macaulay, whose sympathies were entirely with parliament, calls the actions of the House of Commons in the first three parliaments of Charles I. a hazardous game on which were staked the destinies of the English people ; it was played on the side of the House of Commons with keenness, and with admirable dexterity, coolness, and perseverance. " Great statesmen who looked far behind them and far before them were at the head of that assembly. They were resolved to place the king in such a situation that he must either conduct the administration in conformity with the wishes of his parliament, or make outrageous attacks on

the most sacred principles of the constitution." [1] If it was as carefully thought out as this, it was indeed a hazardous game; and if the king or his advisers were uncompromising, it could only lead to civil war or revolution. If Charles had regarded the crown as the chief representative of the people, there would have been no difficulty; he would have accepted their point of view. Unfortunately the theory of the Divine Right of the kingship made him feel that all the right was on his side; he was, too, badly advised, though not by bad men.

The parliament of 1628 began its first session on 17th March 1628. The bulk of the members of the House of Commons were determined to finish with the system of unparliamentary taxation, and generally of what would now be called decree-law. Macaulay's view of the definiteness, the deliberateness, of the opposition's policy appears to be correct. "Upon this dispute," Sir John Eliot of Port Eliot, Cornwall, declared in the House, "not alone our goods and lands are engaged, but all that we call ours. Those rights, those privileges, that made our fathers freemen, are in question. If they be not now more carefully preserved, they will render us to posterity less free, less worthy than our fathers." If the opposition felt in this way, it cannot be said that their conduct was very extreme, seeing that they still went on trying to solve the question between crown and parliament, until 1642; nor can it be said that Charles was not given time and opportunities to adjust his policy to the views of the House.

In this, its first session, the Parliament of 1628 passed the Petition of Right, the ancient form of "petition" rather than bill having been adopted in order to spare the susceptibilities of King Charles; a humble petition after passing both Houses and receiving the assent of the king became, just as a bill did, statutory. The Petition of Right, to which Charles after much hesitation gave his assent, enacted: that no freeman should be compelled to give money to the crown, by way of tax, loan, or other means, without consent of parliament; that no freeman should be imprisoned contrary to the law of the land; that there be no billeting of soldiers or sailors in private houses; that commissions to punish soldiers or sailors by martial law be revoked. Macaulay considers the Petition of Right second in importance only to Magna Carta.

The second session of this third parliament took place in January–March 1629. In the time between the first and second sessions three important things happened: the first was that Buckingham was assassinated at Portsmouth when making preparations for a new expedition to La Rochelle. The assassin was an officer, John Felton, who had brooded over his grievances—that he had not received his pay and not been promoted. The second event was the promotion of the earnest and uncompromising High Churchman, William Laud, Bishop of Bath and Wells, to the See of London. The third was the decision of Thomas Wentworth, till now an Opposition member of the House of Commons,

[1] *History of England*, i. p. 42.

to join the king's side. The three events were connected in this way: the removal of Buckingham by death made vacant a space in the king's counsels which Laud and Wentworth filled. The two men, recognising their community of aim, came to an understanding: Laud advised Charles on Church affairs, Wentworth on state policy. They called their joint policy, *Thorough*. Wentworth's change from the opposition to the side of the crown can be explained on the ground of principle: he had supported the passage of the Petition of Right through the House of Commons. The essential civic liberties of the petition having been vindicated, Wentworth may have thought that this was sufficient. His inclination, his temperament, was towards strength, decision, efficiency: these qualities he believed to be inherent or possible only in the executive government, the crown. Laud and Wentworth were the chief advisers of Charles through the next eleven years, during which no parliament met.

Charles's eleven years of personal government were a bad mistake. It was a clear breach of the constitution which then as now comprised well-recognised customs, one of which was that parliaments should meet with reasonable frequency. Macaulay says that never before had parliament been intermitted for more than five years. Government required money; and though the crown had a good many sources of income such as feudal dues which did not require parliamentary authority, these were not sufficient. Tunnage and poundage required parliamentary grant, but Charles levied them simply under his own authority. To insist on the obsolete custom that every gentleman with land of £40 a year must take up knighthood or pay a fine was an abuse of feudal law. Oliver Cromwell was thus fined £10 in 1630. The imposition of ship-money, though there were old precedents for it, was also an abuse of law, particularly as there was no war; peace had been made with both France and Spain in 1632. Ship-money was levied in 1634 on maritime counties. In 1635 the levy was extended to inland counties; it was worth £200,000 a year. It was all spent on the fleet, but this did not justify its levy without parliamentary assent. In the case against John Hampden, who refused to pay, in 1637, the Bench declared, reasonably, that in emergency, for the safety of the kingdom, the crown can take extraordinary action; the judges added that the king was *the sole judge of the necessity*. This was to put the people in shackles, for the crown could go on declaring an emergency for ever.

Charles's religious policy was as unwise as his civil policy. He supported Laud through thick and thin. Laud wanted religious unity and believed that this implied conformity not only in doctrine but in practice. Many congregations had dropped certain practices for years, perhaps ever since the Reformation—practices such as bowing at the name of Jesus, turning to the east when the Creed is being said, wearing a surplice. The savage punishments inflicted by the Star Chamber on Prynne, Bastwick, and Burton—a fine of £5000 each

and loss of their ears, and imprisonment for life—for writing against bishops, show the ruthlessness with which the Laudian policy was enforced. Laud was a member of the Star Chamber, and, of course, of the Court of High Commission set up under the Elizabethan Statute of Supremacy.

All this shows that the crown had become practically absolute, almost as in France; only one thing was required in England to ensure Charles a despotism as absolute as that of the French crown—that one thing was a standing army. The ship-money decision in the Court of Exchequer provided the means for this: for if, under plea of necessity, the crown could levy a tax for a navy it could surely with equal reasonableness do so for an army. According to Macaulay's view, "this was the conjuncture at which the liberties of the nation were in the greatest peril." Strafford said that royalty was "for ever vindicated from the conditions and restraints of subjects." Many Puritans took ship for New England where, since the Pilgrim Fathers went there in 1620, prosperous, free Puritan communities had been growing up. Oliver Cromwell seriously thought of migrating to New England, but abandoned the design, though he renewed it again later and once more gave it up.

At this conjuncture in English history—parliament in abeyance, taxation by executive authority, decree-laws, justice accommodated to "necessity"—the Scottish nation intervened, not spontaneously, but because it too was provoked by Charles and Laud. In the same year as Wentworth (Earl of Strafford) had been made Lord Deputy of Ireland, 1633, Laud had become Archbishop of Canterbury. He introduced a new liturgy into Scotland, a revised, and (the Scots held) even more prelatical edition of the English Prayer Book. Its use provoked in 1637 a riot in St Giles' Church, Edinburgh; and in 1638 Scottish nobles and clergy signed a National Covenant for the defence of their Presbyterian religion. Charles took this as an act of defiance and he replied to it with war; it was he who began a civil war in the island. The Scots, however, raised an army too—a fine army, with officers who had served in the Thirty Years War—and marched down to the border. Charles's miserable pressed troops were no good; he had to make peace, the Treaty of Berwick, 24th June 1639, acknowledging the right of the Scots to settle their religion in a free parliament.

Here the matter might have ended if Charles had left the Scots to settle their own religious affairs. "He refused either to rescind the acts establishing Episcopacy, or to confirm the acts of the Scottish Parliament."[1] Strafford had not been responsible for Charles's expedition against Scotland of 1639, but he was now brought from Ireland to conduct a second expedition which Charles seems to have been determined to make. Strafford advised, however, that parliament should be summoned, apparently under the impression—notwith-

[1] Firth, *Cromwell*, p. 43.

standing the difficulty still being experienced in the collection of ship-money —that what would now be called national feeling (or national passion) would result in enthusiastic votes of money for war against the defiant Scots. The king agreed to Strafford's advice, and the " Short Parliament " met, 13th April 1640. The period of Personal Government was at an end.

Hallam, on the evidence of the letters of Laud and Strafford and the *History* of Clarendon, takes the view that the Personal Government was a deliberate plan of Charles " to supersede absolutely and for ever the legal constitution of England." [1] Strafford in Ireland always used parliament, though he expected it to do as he wished. Laud and the judges, however compliant towards the crown, were in favour of preserving the parliamentary forms of the constitution. Only Charles and (to use Hallam's description) " that pernicious woman," his queen, Henrietta Maria, wanted, like the monarchs of France and Spain, to dispense with parliaments altogether. From this point of view the years of Personal Government, 1629–40, can be seen as the real " crisis of English liberty." Notwithstanding the economic prosperity of England under the Personal Government (with no war, low taxation), the fact remains that freedom was doomed in England and in the rest of Europe too (and perhaps even in the New England colonies), if the Personal Government had not broken down in the Scottish affair in 1639–40.

Nor was this Scottish affair a mere accident or incident. It was a step in the scheme for bringing the whole island, in religious as in civil matters, into subjection to the crown. In the view of Laud and Strafford, the Scottish policy was well conceived, but badly executed. " The business of Scotland," Strafford wrote to Laud, " so well laid, so pleasing to God and man, had it been effected, was miserably lost in the execution." Laud replied: " Indeed, my lord, the business of Scotland, I can be bold to say without vanity (he says this, because it was Laud, not Strafford, who conceived it), was well laid, and was a great service to the crown, as well as to God Himself. And that it should fatally fail in the execution is a great blow."

It seems impossible to avoid the conclusion that King Charles has the responsibility for the unhappy collapse of royal government which now began and which was completed within two years. After a prolonged trial, he had abandoned Personal Government. He had returned to parliament in April 1640. Clarendon, a royalist, shortly to become his best adviser, admits that the members of the " Short Parliament " were well disposed towards the crown: " It could never be hoped that so many sober and dispassionate men would ever meet again in that place, or fewer who brought ill purposes with them." The king demanded a supply of money. The Commons replied: " Till the liberties of the House and the Kingdom were cleared, they knew not whether

[1] Hallam, *The Constitutional History of England* (10th ed.), ii. p. 87.

they had anything to give or no." What they wanted was a reversal of the Hampden Ship-Money decision. Charles at once dissolved parliament, 5th May 1640. Without parliament, without funds (for ship-money and "coat and conduct money" were exacted with increasing difficulty), and without an army (for miserable pressed men and some Roman Catholic gentry were hardly an army), he renewed the Scottish war.

Charles appointed Strafford, his one really strong man, to command the army; and doubtless, though ill, Strafford would have made a good showing if he had had a proper army to command. The Scots did not wait at home to be attacked. General Alexander Leslie led his men over the border, and after a brush at Newburn-on-Tyne (28th April 1640), forced Strafford's troops to retire. The indomitable Strafford was preparing for a new military effort (though his troops were in mutiny, murdering their officers), when twelve English peers [1] sent a demand to the king for peace and a parliament. Charles threw in his hand, and summoned parliament for 3rd November (1640).

"We are now," writes Hallam, "arrived at that momentous period in our history which no Englishman ever regards without interest, and few without prejudice." Macaulay, equally moved as the majestic march of his history proceeds, writes: "In November 1640 met that renowned Parliament which, in spite of many errors and disasters, is justly entitled to the reverence and gratitude of all who, in any part of the world, enjoy the blessings of constitutional government."

"The first fruits of the Commons' laudable zeal for reformation," as Hallam calls it, was the Triennial Bill, to which Charles gave assent, providing that parliament should assemble at least once in three years, and should not be dissolved within fifty days of the first day of meeting. After this "admirable statute," a bill was enacted declaring ship-money illegal. The Star Chamber was abolished, also the Court of High Commission, Council of the North, Council of Wales, Stannary Courts of Devon and Cornwall. In the view of constitutional lawyers then and now these great statutes, all enacted in the first six months of the Long Parliament, made scarcely any material change in the constitution and took nothing from the crown which it had anciently possessed.

Less creditable was the Commons' treatment of Strafford. It may be that as Robert Baillie, Scottish delegate present at the sessions of the Long Parliament, wrote: "Intolerable pride and oppression cries to heaven for a vengeance;" and to impeach Strafford before the peers was to ensure a lawful trial. Finding, however, that impeachment was not proceeding as they wished, the Commons changed over to the method of attainder and killed Strafford by Act of Parliament. Charles's assent to the Bill of Attainder robs him of all defence. What-

[1] Needless to say they were constitutionally minded peers: Hertford, Bedford, Essex, Warwick, Paget, Wharton, Say, Brook, Kimbolton, Searle, Mulgrave, Bolingbroke.

ever Strafford had done, he had done for the king and with the king's approval; and if Charles was going to defy the Commons at the point of the sword (as he did later) he might as well have done it over this. Clarendon says that Charles assented to his friend's death to prevent a Bill of Attainder being brought forward against Queen Henrietta Maria—surely not a very good defence. Strafford was executed on 12th May 1641. In Shorthouse's *John Inglesant*, the best novel about this period and deeply sympathetic with the Royalist cause, there is a moving scene where Charles, some time after the execution, starts out of bed one night and rushes into the anteroom with horror on his countenance: he has seen the ghost of Strafford.

A bill, popularly called the Root and Branch Bill, for the abolition of Episcopacy, passed the House of Commons in May 1641, but seems only to have been intended as a demonstration. The bill which eventually passed both Houses and received the royal assent (though not until February 1642, after the king had left London) simply disestablished the bishops by removing them from the House of Lords. There seemed a probability at last that crown and parliament having now by law been put into balance—a balance satisfactory to most people—the civil trouble might cease. The Grand Remonstrance of 22nd November 1641 was a bad step, probably framed with the deliberate intention of preventing the constitutional question from ending at this stage. Hallam, Whig and entirely sympathetic with the parliamentary cause, writes: "Those who distrusted the king's intentions as well towards themselves as the public cause, of whom Pym and Hampden, with the assistance of St John, though actually solicitor-general, were the chief, found no better means of keeping alive the animosity that was beginning to subside than by framing the Remonstrance on the state of the kingdom, presented to the king in November 1641." It only passed the House by eleven votes. Cromwell (who, as member for Cambridge, was very active in the Long Parliament) told Falkland that if it had not passed, he would have sold all he had and taken ship for New England. It is not clear whether Cromwell's anxiety, in case the Grand Remonstrance did not pass, was for the constitution or for his own life. Probably Pym, Hampden, Cromwell, and one or two others now felt that whatever concessions were made by Charles, their heads would sooner or later be laid on the block on account of their activity in circumscribing the arbitrary power of the crown. It is quite likely that they were planning now (November 1641) to drive the king to take up arms.

On the other hand, the king met them more than half-way. Three moderate royalists—Falkland, Colepepper, and Hyde (later Earl of Clarendon)—had formed a group or party of constitutionalists for the king. Clarendon relates in his history that he had obtained from Charles a promise that he, the king, would take no important step without consulting him. It was as if Clarendon were

feeling his way towards a political system which would have solved—which in the following century did solve—the whole trouble: the system by which the minister advises the king and assumes the responsibility. Yet in spite of this promise, Charles, who seems always to have been liable to be carried away by his impulses, took an irretrievable step: and for the same reason, apparently, as that for which he had assented to Strafford's execution, that he feared an impending impeachment of the queen. On 3rd January 1641 he had one member of the House of Lords (Kimbolton) and five members of the House of Commons (Pym, Hampden, Holles, Hazlerigg, and Strode) accused of treason by the attorney-general. This was not the irretrievable step: the fatal, and really inexcusable, blunder was for the king, in person, with a *posse* of soldiers, to come into the House of Commons himself to apprehend the accused five members (4th January 1641). Clarendon, who was a contemporary royalist, and Hallam, who was a nineteenth-century Whig, both agree in considering that this step, whether it should succeed or fail (and it failed dramatically, for "the birds had flown"), was practically certain to precipitate civil war.

The bill which actually brought on (or the refusal of which brought on) the Great Civil War was the Militia Bill. There was no standing army in England, for the couple of hundred Yeomen of the Guard (started by Henry VII.), and the hired men who kept the guns at the Tower, Tilbury, and Dover, could not be called an army. There was, however, the militia, the *posse comitatus*, the levy of all freemen, whom the Lord Lieutenant[1] could call out in defence of the country. The king, naturally, appointed the Lords Lieutenant. Now, in February 1642, a bill was brought forward in the House of Commons, nominating the Lord Lieutenant in every county to be at the orders of the two Houses of Parliament, and to be irremovable for two years. It has been frequently said since then that the House had to bring in this bill because they could not trust Charles not to attack them; but even the Whig Hallam writes: "It is equitable to observe that the Commons had by no means greater reason to distrust the faith of Charles, than he had to anticipate fresh assaults from them on the power he had inherited, on the form of religion which alone he thought lawful, on the counsellors who had served him most faithfully, and on the nearest of his domestic ties."

Charles had left London on 11th January, not yet, it seems, decided upon war, but because he felt out of his element in London, which was now thoroughly excited, and wholly for the parliament. He was at Newmarket when there arrived (9th February 1642), the deputation of the House of Commons, petitioning him to assent to the Militia Bill with its time limit of two years. "By God," the king answered, "not for an hour. You have asked that of me in this was never asked of a king, and with which I will not trust my wife and children."

[1] Before the institution of Lords Lieutenant, the sheriff called out the *posse comitatus*.

CHAPTER XVI

THE GREAT CIVIL WAR

POSTERITY HAS ALWAYS the advantage of seeing what should have been done. Charles I. should have abdicated. By this he would have averted a civil war which, even if he had gained complete victory, would not have solved the constitutional problem. Charles II. at that time (1642), if brought under a regency of decent Puritan peers and squires, would have been a better man and king than his wandering life on the Continent made him. This method of solving the trouble was, it seems, not thought of. Macaulay says that if there had been an alternative royal family, like that of Lancaster in 1399, or that of Orange in 1688, " it is probable that the Houses would have changed the dynasty, and would have made no formal change in the constitution . . . But there was no prince of the blood royal in the parliamentary party." Abdication would have been the right plan for Charles. On the other hand, not to have pressed the Militia Bill would have been the right policy for parliament. The Houses had destroyed all the existing instruments of arbitrary government; had gained the Triennial Act; and, further, by an act of 10th May 1641, had obtained from the king that this particular parliament (the Long Parliament) should not be dissolved without its own consent. It had therefore perfectly well ensured the liberties of the people unless Charles called on the militia to attack them or invited a French army to invade England: and if these—not very likely—things were to happen, parliament would be in no worse position (probably better, as having a better " case ") than it was when it refused to compromise over the Militia Bill and so forced on a war.

The verdict of history, that is the conclusion following from a reasonable survey of all the known circumstances after the passions of the period are long passed away, seems to be that the Great Civil War was not needed for the protection of English liberties and that parliament has more responsibility for its occurrence than has Charles, though each could have avoided it by a certain concession. The difficulty in pronouncing a judgment is that history is not always a reasonable survey but, curiously, tends on every great question to favour the victorious cause. Not only in his own eyes, but in the eyes of posterity, the victor is always right. In regard to the Great Civil War, however, there is a historian who not merely has the strength of mind to think that the victor may be wrong, but takes this view in spite of the fact that he is a Whig parliamentarian: this historian is Henry Hallam, who published his *Constitu-*

tional History of England in 1827, when the tendency of the age was still against the crown. Hallam asks the question: Whether the risk attending his (Charles's) continuance upon the throne with the limited prerogatives of an English sovereign was great enough to counterbalance the miseries of protracted civil war, the perils of defeat: and the no less perils, as experience showed, of victory? And he answers the question, on balance, in the negative. He ends with one irrefutable argument, showing that the Great Civil War was not needed to secure civic liberties: the bulk of the Royalists were peers and county gentry: "I cannot believe them," concludes Hallam, "to have so soon forgotten their almost unanimous discontent at the king's arbitrary government in 1640, or their general concurrence in the first salutary measures of the parliament." [1]

On 23rd April 1642 Charles with his company presented himself before Hull. It is not certain that he had decided at this moment to fight. An arsenal had been established at Hull for the expeditions against Scotland in 1639–40. The king naturally wanted to secure the arms and stores collected there, all of them legally belonging to the crown. The governor of Hull, whose name was Sir John Hotham, refused him entrance. This was clearly war.

Oliver Cromwell was the discovery of the war, and luck was on the side of parliament in possessing him. He was what the eighteenth-century poet Gray would have called, "a village Hampden." His father was a country gentleman of moderate property, and he was given the sound education customary in that kind of family: the local school at Huntingdon, Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, Lincoln's Inn. He read, as the gentry did in those days, a fair amount of Roman History, and books like Raleigh's *History of the World*. He married the daughter of a city merchant. He had eight children, four sons and four daughters, all of whom survived childhood—a very unusual good fortune in a seventeenth-century family. They all turned out to be decent and active citizens. He farmed his own land, farmed the tithes of Ely Cathedral, was (as most of the small country gentry were) quite a good business man, for that was how they made their living. He stood up for his locality when disputes rose with powerful nobles or syndicates about land-drainage, commoner's rights and such things. In 1628 or thereabouts he went through the moving religious experience which all Puritans had or hoped to have, called conversion. In 1628–29 he represented Huntingdon in the "Petition of Right" Parliament; in 1640 he represented Cambridge in the Short Parliament and in the Long Parliament. In October 1641 there was a rebellion in Ireland, and a massacre of many Presbyterians in Ulster which had been "planted," or colonised, chiefly by Scotsmen in 1611. A public subscription was opened among members of the Long Parliament and citizens of London to provide forces against the Irish rebellion, which was "Papistical," and wrongly suspected to be promoted by the king. Cromwell

[1] Hallam, *Constitutional History*, ii. p. 147.

subscribed £500, probably a whole year's income. He had made, so far as is known, only one speech in 1641, and was doubtless regarded by Pym and the grandees of the Commons as a sound, sensible, dependable, and public-spirited man, of no great distinction, of some particular importance because the eminent John Hampden, his cousin, sometimes took his advice. Cromwell had not given up his habit of reading, and he followed closely in the *Swedish Intelligencer* and other similar periodicals (of which there were a good number) the progress of the Thirty Years War in Germany. He was not without the sense of adventure and seriously thought in 1638 and 1642 of setting up his home in New England. There was nothing in all this, however, to lead anyone to expect that this sensible, capable, country gentleman, looking much like hundreds of his class, fond of his book, his horse, and his pipe, would become the General and ruler of all England, and the arbiter of the Powers of Western Europe.

Trained troops always defeat untrained, unless the untrained have an enormous superiority in numbers and in weapons, which they had not in the Great Civil War. At first neither side was trained, and so the Royalists, having the greater proportion of gentry, had the advantage. " These gentlemen," Macaulay writes, " mounted on their favourite horses, and commanding little bands, comprised of their younger brothers, grooms, gamekeepers and huntsmen, were, from the very first day on which they took the field, qualified to play their part with credit in a skirmish." Parliament, curiously, was not much supported by the citizenry and yeomanry, but had to hire anyone who would serve, mainly (according to Cromwell's famous conversation with Hampden) " old decayed serving-men, tapsters, and such kind of fellows." [1] It was Cromwell who saw the need for a disciplined army and made one, and so ensured the defeat of the king. Charles, on the other hand, could not have done this even if he had wanted to and had known how to do so; for he had no money. A military chest is the basis of trained and well-equipped troops. Parliament had the taxes. Charles himself was not a military man, though as many other young Englishmen have done, he went through the fighting with energy and credit, if not with zest. His secretary, Sir Philip Warwick, wrote that if he had been as daring and active in forestalling danger, as he was " steady and undaunted " in every hazardous encounter, he might have quashed the rebellion at the start. Not a soldier himself, he had no good soldiers to advise him, his nephews Rupert and Maurice, princes of the Palatinate, being just cavalry raiders with the tradition of German " partisan " warfare. Cromwell, having sympathetically followed in the newsletters the fortunes of the Swedes in the Thirty Years War, had an idea of the Swedish model for his army.

The first clash between the crown's forces and parliament's occurred at Edgehill, near Warwick, on 23rd October 1642. Each side seems to have done about

[1] Cromwell's *Letters and Speeches*, edited Carlyle (Speech IV.).

the same amount of damage to the other. Then both armies made for London by different routes. The king's forces reached Turnham Green, on the outskirts of London, on 13th November. The London train-bands had turned out to defend the city; Charles, probably correctly, decided it unwise to let his army try to fight its way into and through the labyrinth of the city. He returned to Oxford which became his capital for the next three and a half years. The peers (about 80) and commoners (175) who took his side formed a House of Lords and House of Commons there. The colleges offered good accommodation for officers, storage for arms and munitions, and even plate for the military chest. The university continued to be a place of study, for here, as in the rest of the country, the normal activities of civil life went on. In those days when artillery had only a short range, Oxford was easily defensible. It was protected by Royalist garrisons occupying all the little towns within a radius of six or ten or fifteen miles around, like Abingdon, Dorchester, Brill, Woodstock, Witney, and by an inner system of waterways, "cuts," made from the Cherwell, Isis, Evenlode, or Windrush; like those still to be seen by Magdalen College or at the Corpus playing-field.

There was fighting between the partisans in every county, sieges of country-houses, fights for little market towns. And there were the campaigns and the big battles, organised from Oxford by the king or from London by the parliament, and involving 10,000, 15,000, or even 20,000 troops on either side. As the two sides were fairly evenly matched and left the bulk of the people to go on ploughing the land and buying and selling, the war might have gone on, an expensive inconvenience, for years and years, unless some foreign government intervened. On the whole perhaps (except that he had not the navy), the advantage lay with the king. The parliamentary Captain-General Essex failed to take Oxford in the summer of 1643, and John Hampden received a mortal wound on Chalgrove Field, near Dorchester, 18th June. Charles had a good plan—the "Concentric Plan," of 1643—for taking London; the Earl of Newcastle was to march down from Yorkshire to the Essex bank of the Thames; Hopton was to march from Cornwall to the Surrey side (both of them to arrive below London) while Charles was to march his men down the river from Oxford. Thus London would be taken in pincers above and below both sides of the river. This plan, however, was ruined by "regionalism." The forces of Newcastle stopped to besiege Hull; and the Cornishmen would not pass on unless they could first take Plymouth. Charles felt compelled to besiege Gloucester. When the Earl of Essex brought up the London train-bands and raised the siege of Gloucester, 5th September 1643, the triple plan was for ever finished.

In September 1643 Pym negotiated the Solemn League and Covenant between England and Scotland, and so secured the services of the Scottish army. Together the English and Scottish parliamentary armies won a resounding victory at Marston Moor near York against Prince Rupert and 20,000

Royalist troops (2nd July 1644). In spite of this, however, there was no prospect of an early end to the war; neither the parliamentary generalship nor army was good enough. Largely through the efforts of Colonel Cromwell, who had made a great reputation fighting in East Anglia and at Marston Moor, a Self-Denying Ordinance went through parliament, 3rd April 1645, requiring all members of parliament (including peers) who were officers to lay down their commissions. Thus Lord Essex and Lord Manchester were got rid of. Parliament could recommission any whom it chose, and would have done this for Cromwell, but he was given so many military tasks one after the other that he had no opportunity even formally to lay down his commission and take it up again. About the time that the Self-Denying Ordinance was going through the two Houses, parliament also organised the army on the model of the forces of the Eastern Association, a union of Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Huntingdonshire, and Lincolnshire, in which Cromwell had raised and led a regiment of 1100 men. The spirit of Cromwell's famous regiment of "Ironsides" was communicated to all the Eastern Association forces and ultimately to the New Model Army, of which Fairfax was General and Cromwell Lieutenant-General. It was this army which won the decisive battle of Naseby in Northamptonshire, 14th June 1645.

The king's position after Naseby was really hopeless, though the "partisan" war might go on for months in certain counties and his headquarters be kept safely at Oxford. Charles was never completely shut in, but could always issue to take part in any big undertaking like the expedition to Cornwall in 1644, when he captured Lord Essex's army at Lostwithiel, or the Naseby campaign of 1645. He had several times thought of going to Scotland to join Montrose who, in 1644-45, won a remarkable series of victories, but lost the last, at Philiphaugh, in the Ettrick valley, 13th September 1645. Charles was actually on his way north (knowing nothing yet about the battle of Philiphaugh) to join Montrose with a considerable force when he was defeated by Major-General Poyntz at Rowton Heath near Chester on 24th September 1645, so he went back to Oxford.

In 1646 parliamentary forces were drawing nearer to Oxford. Queen Henrietta Maria had long before left her quarters in Merton College and had gone to France. Charles remained in Christ Church. The last battle of the Civil War was fought by the Royalist Sir Jacob Astley, who came from Worcestershire with a body of three thousand men in an attempt to get through to Oxford. He was defeated in March 1646, at Stow-on-the-Wold. On 27th April, Charles, dressed as a groom, gave the watchword to the guard at Magdalen Bridge and rode by way of Dorchester, Henley, Slough, Hillingdon, Harrow-on-the-Hill, Cambridge, Huntingdon, to Newark, where he gave himself up to the Scots. He was surrendered to the English parliamentary authorities, "in a manner,"

Macaulay remarks, " which did not much exalt their national character." Oxford capitulated on 24th June 1646, and the Great Civil War was at an end.

The winning of the war was undoubtedly due to Cromwell and the New Model Army which, as Clarendon wrote in his *History of the Rebellion*, proceeded to destroy king and government with the discipline and regularity of a monarchy. The Royalists, on the other hand, Clarendon sadly admitted, " fought for the king with the weapons of disorder," so that where the Royalist forces came, the inhabitants hid their supplies; but when the parliament forces came along, the houses were found filled with food and fodder, for which good prices were paid out of parliamentary funds.

CHAPTER XVII

KING CHARLES'S HEAD

IT MIGHT HAVE been expected that when King Charles left Oxford, on 27th April 1646, he would have made for some small seaport. It is true that parliament had the navy and all the large ports, but some of Charles's many supporters could easily have arranged a passage for him to the Continent, as they arranged for the escape of Queen Henrietta Maria and the king's son.

Charles seems to have adopted the rather risky plan of giving himself up to the Scots as a means of continuing the war, as it were, from inside his enemies' lines. He thought that he might be able to bring over the Scots to his side or in some way or other to "make himself the arbiter" between Scots and English or between Presbyterians and Independents. Clarendon writes that the idea of making himself the arbiter between mutually suspicious bodies was a fatal obsession to which the king clung ruinously down to his tragic end.

It is very difficult to know what to do with a king if he has been captured by his subjects after a rebellion. The best thing would have been to let Charles escape abroad, as William of Orange later allowed James II. to do. Charles I. would not have been any more dangerous to the Commonwealth than his son, Charles II., became. Imprisonment in the Tower of London or in the Isle of Man would, next to letting him escape abroad, have been a reasonable policy. To execute him was a certain way to promote, sooner or later, a restoration, just as the execution of Louis XVI. did a hundred and fifty years later.

There was another alternative which, in the mind of a present-day reader may seem almost inconceivable, but which was seriously considered by many people then, namely, that Charles should be restored on conditions. The Scots, whose quarrel with Charles was not so deep as that of the English, were willing to consider restoration; but so was the English parliament, which offered to Charles while he was still in the hands of the Scots (having been moved with them from Newark to Newcastle) the "Propositions of Newcastle." The conditions were that Charles should enforce the Presbyterian Covenant over the three kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and concede to parliament the control of the militia for twenty years. When this negotiation came to nothing the Scots agreed with parliament to receive the refund of military expenses due to them; they then evacuated Newcastle and went home, handing over Charles to Commissioners of Parliament, 30th January 1647. The king was placed under guard in Holmby House, Northamptonshire. With splendid

but ill-founded optimism, he continued to believe that he could return to his throne without making any essential concession, by the simple (in practice really very complicated and tortuous) process of " making himself the umpire." This was the idea which Clarendon, observing the course of events from the Channel Islands whither he had gone with Prince Charles (Charles II.), says in his *History of Rebellion,* was fatal to the king.

The " umpire " method was now to be applied not to the full between Scots and English, but between Presbyterians and Independents. The war had started with a predominantly Presbyterian House of Commons and army; but while the House—remaining undissolved—had remained Presbyterian, the army, through the selective process which a long war entails, had become more and more Independent. The original Presbyterian generals and armies had shown no great military capacity; whereas Cromwell and the regiments raised by the Eastern Association from Independent districts had gained victory after victory. The New Model Army of 1645 naturally incorporated the proved successful generals and colonels and their *corps,* and those generals and colonels naturally went on selecting officers and recruiting men after their own kind who produced the best military results. Though Presbyterianism, church-government by synods, from the General Assembly down to the kirk-session of the parish, was not particularly favourable to the idea of monarchy, Independency—the religious government of each congregation by itself—had little or no affinity with monarchy at all.

Now the civil government began to experience the difficulty which had beset the ancient Roman Senate and has beset so many civil governments in the twentieth century: this was the difficulty of controlling the military machine which it had created. When the Great Civil War ended with the surrender of the king in 1646, there were forty thousand trained soldiers in the service of parliament. The civilians wisely decided to reduce the number to sixteen thousand men, and might have been able to do so but for dissension with the Scots, the Irish rebellion, the fear of Royalist counter-revolution, and the difficulty of paying off the arrears of the army's wages. The last condition would seem to have been the simplest to fulfil, but fourteen years passed by and the Restoration took place, with what Cromwell called the " poor, unpaid army " still in arrear of its wages.

Charles's plan of becoming the umpire between Presbyterians and Independents, or rather of being adopted by one side against the other, looked like maturing; for the Parliament-Presbyterian leaders, when the army refused to disband without pay, decided to call in the Scots and to suppress the army by force. This meant that the " Roundheads," having fought the king, were now going to fight each other; and one side, the Presbyterian, was going to bring back to power the king whom it had just been fighting to abase. The king was

Van Dyck.

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CHARLES I.

to be brought to London where parliament was, or perhaps to be sent to Scotland. Cromwell now forestalled this by despatching a troop of horse under a certain Cornet Joyce to Holmby House, 31st May 1647. Charles was brought to Newmarket, where there was a large camp. The army was next marched up to Hounslow Heath. This brought parliament to its knees (4th August 1647). Henceforth the army ruled, though it was uncertain whether it was the council of generals, or the soldiers' councils (" Levellers ") elected from each regiment (for these now familiar " Soviets " were established throughout the army) which really wielded the power.

The army now tried its hand at negotiation with the king for a permanent settlement. The council of generals offered him the " Heads of the Proposals," drafted by General Ireton, Cromwell's son-in-law. These were the most liberal terms ever put before Charles: religious toleration—Presbyterianism, Independency, or Anglican episcopacy; a council of state to share with the king control of the military forces (but for the first ten years parliament to have the control); a parliament, elected on a reformed franchise (equal constituencies), every two years. Charles could have accepted these proposals with absolute confidence, for the army was supreme over England, and Cromwell, Ireton, and all the other God-fearing Independent soldiers would have kept the control. *Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat.* Charles rejected the Heads of the Proposals.

The King: *You cannot do without me; you will fall to ruin if I do not sustain you.*

Ireton: *Sir, you have the intention to be the arbitrator between the Parliament and us, and we mean to be it between your Majesty and the Parliament.*

Later—

The King: *I shall play my game as well as I can.*

Ireton: *If your Majesty have a game to play, you must give us also the leave to play ours.*[1]

It is impossible not to admire the courage and coolness of Charles, but it was madness, for he was really helpless in the hands of these resolute soldiers who were not stupid men, and were behaving reasonably, frankly, fairly.

The committees of the soldiery now sent up proposals (called " The Agreement of the People ") which in effect were for the establishing of a democratic republic where, though passed over in silence, crown and House of Lords would really have no place. Debates on constitutional theory and practice went on for a couple of weeks among the high officers, and between the high officers and the soldiery. On 11th November (1647) the king, who had been brought with the army from Newmarket, and was kept at Hampton Court, escaped to Carisbrooke Castle, Isle of Wight. The commander of Carisbrooke,

[1] Quoted by Firth, *Cromwell*, p. 173.

Colonel Hammond, took charge of the king; whether Hammond was for parliament or for the army was uncertain. Although the king was so strictly guarded as to be unable to escape to the Continent, Charles's friends nevertheless managed to communicate with him and to put him in touch with the Scots, now thoroughly alarmed at the growing Independent ascendancy in England. The result was the outbreak of the "Second Civil War," with the object of restoring Charles to the throne.

The Second Civil War began in Wales where the Commander of Pembroke Castle declared for the king in March 1648. There were simultaneous risings in Kent and Essex. In July a Scottish Presbyterian army under the Duke of Hamilton crossed the border. Fairfax and Cromwell had to divide their forces, and for five months there was fighting in South Wales, the Eastern Counties, and Lancashire, until Cromwell was able to concentrate his forces and meet the Scots at Preston on 17th August. Here and at Wigan and Warrington in the following days he overthrew the Scottish army. Following up his success, he marched north, crossed the Tweed (20th September 1648), and made an agreement with the Duke of Argyll for maintenance of a common policy between the Scots and English governments.

The soldiers, who had to bear the burden of politicians' bungling, laid the responsibility for the Second Civil War upon Charles; and yet they heard, while the war was still going on, of parliamentary commissions meeting the king at Newport, Isle of Wight (18th September 1648). The king offered, on condition of restoration to the throne, to establish Presbyterianism for three years and to surrender the control of the militia for twenty years. He wrote privately, however, to a friend, "The great concession I made to-day, was made in order to my escape." The army did not know of this letter, but they were determined anyhow to do away with this sovereign whom they now regularly called "that man of blood." The answer of the army to the parliament's negotiations with the king at Newport was the despatch by Fairfax and Cromwell of troops, who took Charles from Newport to confinement in Hurst Castle, Hampshire (1st December 1648); and of others under Colonel Pride, who, on 6th December, excluded 141 Presbyterian members from the House of Commons. This left the House to a Rump of fifty or sixty Independent members, in full co-operation with the army leaders. Cromwell, who was practically head of the army, though only Lieutenant-General under General Fairfax, was also, alone of the high officers, a member of the House.

On 23rd December (1648) King Charles was brought from Hurst Castle to Windsor. Cromwell and the other army chiefs, except Fairfax who did nothing, had decided that the king should die. It was exclusively an idea of the army, of the rank and file and of the officers. Cromwell, himself, seems only to have arrived very late at his decision, but when it was made he showed no hesitation.

Among the parliament majority (excluded by Pride's Purge) and among the people as a whole, there was no desire for the king's death; but by this time the army was omnipotent and regardless of public opinion. The Independent Rump passed an ordinance through the House, 6th January 1649, erecting a court of 135 commissioners, who were named, to try the king. Regarded as a "court of justice" the thing was an absurdity and an hypocrisy. About half the commissioners, knowing that they were appointed not to try but to condemn, refused to serve. One of them, Algernon Sidney, declared roundly that he could not serve, for two reasons: first, the king could not be tried by that court; second, no man could be tried by that court.[1]

The king was brought up from Windsor and was lodged in St James's Palace. On 20th January, in Westminster Hall, his trial—if that can be called a trial in which all the judges were practically pledged to a verdict of guilty—was begun. There were about seventy members of the court present. Serjeant Bradshaw was president of the court; Cromwell served as a member. The public were admitted.

Charles, still comparatively young, forty-eight years old, plainly but neatly dressed, dignified, calm, refused to recognise jurisdiction of the court. He kept his hat on and laughed outright when the charge of tyranny and treason was read out against him. Not only did he refuse to recognise the court; he pointed out, truly, that the case concerned not only himself, but every citizen in the kingdom: "If power without law may alter the fundamental laws of the kingdom, I do not know what subject he is in England that can be sure of his life, or anything that he calls his own." After three days of court, with witnesses giving evidence that they had seen the king making war on parliament, Bradshaw ordered the clerk to read the sentence (27th January 1649). This was to the effect that:

> Charles Stuart . . . hath traitorously and maliciously levied war against the present Parliament and people therein represented . . . that he thereby hath been and is the occasioner, author, and contriver of the said unnatural, cruel and bloody wars, and therein guilty of all the treasons, murders, rapines, burnings, spoils, desolations, damage, and mischief to this nation. . . .
>
> For all which treasons and crimes this Court doth adjudge that he, the said Charles Stuart, as a tyrant, traitor, murderer, and public enemy to the good people of this nation, shall be put to death by the severing of his head from his body.

The king was led away to St James's, the soldiers brutally shouting, "Execution!" but the people, against whom the king had been adjudged guilty of committing treason, openly sympathising with him.

Three days later, Monday, 30th January, Charles was to go to his doom. He had said good-bye to two of his children, the Lady Elizabeth and the Duke

[1] Firth, *Cromwell*, p. 218.

of York. He rose on that day two hours before dawn and told his servant, Herbert, to dress him with particular care and with a warmer shirt than usual, lest, in the January frost, he should shiver and people deem him afraid. "I would have no such imputation," he said to Herbert; "I fear not death. Death is not terrible to me. I bless my God I am prepared."

He was dressed in black, wearing the pendant of St George and the ribbon of the Garter. He was cheerful, even gay, and said to Bishop Juxon who attended him: "This is my wedding day." He was not summoned to go out until ten o'clock. Always a vigorous walker, he tended to outdistance his guard, as they all went across St James's Park, and he called cheerfully to the soldiers to go faster. At Whitehall he was kept waiting about three hours in his own bedroom. He prayed with Juxon and ate some bread and drank a glass of wine. At half-past one he was summoned to the scaffold. He stepped through the middle window of the banqueting-house on to the scaffold and made a brief speech. "God's judgments are just. An unjust sentence that I suffered to take effect (this undoubtedly referred to Strafford) is now punished by an unjust sentence upon me." He proceeded:

> For the people, I desire their liberty and freedom as much as anybody whomsoever; but I must tell you that their liberty and freedom consists in having government, in those laws by which their life and goods may be most their own. . . . If I would have given way to have all changed according to the power of the sword, I needed not to have come here; and therefore I tell you (and I pray God it be not laid to your charge) that I am the martyr of the people.

After making this claim, doubtless honestly meant, but rather an extreme one, he then gathered up his long hair in a cap, prayed for a few moments silently, took off his cloak and doublet, knelt down and laid his neck on the block, which was only about six inches high. One blow of the axe severed head from body. A masked man held it up to the people, but did not say the customary phrase, "Behold the head of a traitor." The crowd of people groaned loudly, and troops of horse dispersed them. The head and body were buried in St George's Chapel, Windsor.

The sentence and execution of Charles was a travesty of justice, and a political blunder on the part of his enemies. His behaviour won him back all the sympathy which his own political mistakes and insincerities had lost him. Andrew Marvell, a Puritan and a republican, a great admirer of Cromwell, took occasion in an ode written in praise of Cromwell to do justice to King Charles's bearing at the last:

> He nothing common did or mean
> Upon that memorable scene,
> But with his keener eye
> The axe's edge did try.

Nor call'd the gods, with vulgar spite,
To vindicate his helpless right;
But bow'd his comely head
Down, as upon a bed.

Perhaps Clarendon, in his *History of the Rebellion*, gives the fairest judgment on Charles's complex character:

> He was the worthyest gentleman, the best master, the best frende, the best husbande, the best father, and the best Christian that the Age in which he lyved had produced, and if he was not the best kinge, if he was without some parts and qualityes which have made some kings greate and happy, no other Prince was ever unhappy, who was possest of half his virtues and indownments, and so much without any kinde of vice.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE COMMONWEALTH

THE GREAT CIVIL War and the execution of the king left England under an uncontrolled despotism compared with which the government of Charles I. was a limited monarchy. The despotism was that of the Independent members, the Rump, of the Long Parliament backed by an irresistible standing army. If Charles's Personal Government of 1629–40 had not been representative of the people, still less was the government of the Rump which consisted of some 90 members, all that were allowed to sit out of the 490 members elected to the Long Parliament of November 1640. Their election was over eight years old and a profound revolution had occurred since then. They had long ago outlived their mandate from the constituencies. Yet, under the Act of 11th May 1641, they considered themselves to be indissoluble, without their own consent. This in effect meant indissoluble for ever, although the king, whose habit of suddenly dissolving parliament was the sole reason for the Act of 1641, was now dead. To make its absolute power quite sure, the Rump, claiming to be the parliament of England and sole legislative authority, suppressed the Second Chamber by an Act which declared that the House of Lords was "useless, dangerous, and ought to be abolished" (6th February 1649). It suppressed the institution of monarchy by Act of 8th February. A Council of State of forty-one, which was practically just a committee of the House, was set up to be the executive authority of government. England was declared (by Act of 19th May 1649) to be "A Commonwealth or Free State." Hallam writes:

> Thus by military force, with the approbation of an inconceivably small proportion of the people, the king was put to death, the ancient fundamental laws were overthrown, and a mutilated House of Commons, wherein very seldom more than seventy or eighty sat, was invested with the supreme authority.[1]

To make sure that it was the government, the Rump Parliament sat continuously throughout the year.

Even the soldiers, habituated as they are to authoritarian methods, deemed this to be a monstrous system to be established after six years of insurrection and revolution, the sole purpose of which was to prevent arbitrary government. Cromwell and his officers would certainly have done away with the disgusting

[1] *Constitutional History*, ii. p. 235.

hypocrisy, this sham "Free State," if they had not been occupied with an Irish, a Scottish, and a Dutch war.

The Irish rebellion of 1641 went on year after year; obviously there was no possibility of it being suppressed while all the available English armed forces were engaged in trying to destroy each other in England. So the native Irish and the Anglo-Irish or Scoto-Irish fought each other for eight years, and sacked and burned and murdered. In late summer 1649, Lieutenant-General Cromwell took the army over to Ireland, stormed Drogheda (11th September) and Wexford (12th October). The Civil War in England had been fought comparatively humanely. Cromwell's methods in Ireland can be gauged from a letter of his, written on 17th September to Lenthall, Speaker of the Long Parliament, describing the capture of Drogheda:

> "Divers of the enemy retreated into the Mill-Mount. . . . Our men getting up to them, were ordered by me to put them all to the sword . . . and, I think, that night they put to the sword about 2000 men. . . .
>
> "I am persuaded that this is a righteous judgment of God upon these barbarous wretches who have imbrued their hands in so much innocent blood; and that it will tend to prevent the effusion of blood for the future. Which are the satisfactory grounds to such actions, which otherwise cannot but work remorse and regret."

Having made sufficient desolation in Ireland to call it at any rate a stage towards peace, Cromwell returned to England in January 1650, leaving the Irish war to be finished off by Ireton and Ludlow. About two-thirds of Irish land was confiscated and distributed among "Cromwellians" and Cromwellian supporters. In spite of all this, however, once the war in Ireland was really over, Cromwell's policy was statesmanlike; Ireland (as also Scotland) was united in the Commonwealth, was given representation in the Commonwealth Parliament, and free trade throughout the Commonwealth.

Before the three countries could be thus united, Scotland had to be conquered. For the Scots, though they had made peace with Cromwell in 1648, after the Second Civil War and the campaign of Preston, Wigan, and Warrington, could not stand the execution of Charles, who was their king as well as England's, in 1649. As soon as they heard of the execution, they proclaimed Charles II. king, not of Scotland only, but of Great Britain and Ireland. This, of course, made any sort of composition with the English Commonwealth impossible; one must conquer the other. Charles II., after negotiations in Holland with Scottish Commissioners, accepted the Presbyterian Covenant and came to Scotland. The English Council of State decided to take the offensive. Fairfax, refusing to begin a war against a kindred people, retired into private life. Cromwell became Captain-General, and crossed the border in July (1650) with 16,000 men. On 3rd September he swept the Scottish army off the field at Dunbar. After this he occupied Edinburgh city though he could not take the Castle. Siege

operations continued in various quarters throughout most of the next year. In August 1651, however, General David Leslie effected a decisive diversion by marching boldly into England by way of Carlisle (Charles II. accompanying him), and leaving Cromwell and the English army in Scotland. Cromwell, leaving his steadiest officer called Monk and 6000 men to look after the war in Scotland, marched south. Leslie and Charles II. expected as they passed through Cumberland and Lancashire that the people would rise for the king, but they were disappointed. On 3rd September 1651 they were routed by Cromwell's forces at Worcester. Charles, thirty-one years old, a tall man, "above two yards high, with hair a deep brown, near to black," watched the battle from the Cathedral tower and when the rout of his army was clear, made his escape. By a marvellous journey, disguised as a countryman, at one time hiding in the "Boscobel oak," or in a priest's hole of some royalist mansion, he made his way in six weeks to Brighton and was taken off to France. He landed at Fécamp on 17th October 1651. Thirty years later, Charles himself dictated to Pepys, "the diarist," at Newmarket, an account of his journey. It is published under the title of *The Boscobel Tracts*.[1]

The destruction of the Scottish army at Worcester on 3rd September was fatal to the powers of resistance of the Scots in Scotland. General Monk captured one fortress after another; Scotland was conquered. The system of civil and religious government was left practically unchanged, except that the Scottish Parliament and General Assembly ceased to exist. In 1653 Scotland was merged, along with Ireland, in the Commonwealth.

Besides fighting the Irish and the Scots, the Rump Parliament had a war with the Dutch, notwithstanding their common religious and political interests. The English and Dutch were both trading nations; and in international trade, unfortunately, then as now, unfair competition is the rule. Each state used its political power to secure exclusive economic privileges for its nationals. The Dutch made a treaty with Denmark (March 1651) which gave them advantages in the Baltic trade at the expense of the English. The Rump Parliament replied with the Navigation Act, October 1651, which excluded Dutch trade from the English colonies and prevented Dutch ships from carrying any except Dutch-produced goods to English ports. This stupid trade war led to regular war. It was fought on the sea and resulted in the sinking of an approximately equal number of Dutch and British ships with their crews. In 1654 peace was made without either side conceding anything of importance.

Meanwhile Cromwell, his officers, and probably most of the country had been growing more and more impatient with the shufflings, hesitations, and insincerities of the Rump Parliament, always proclaiming its readiness to dissolve and as often postponing the date or attaching unreasonable conditions to it. "That

[1] *The Boscobel Tracts*, ed. J. Hughes (1857), pp. 147–82.

parliaments should not make themselves perpetual is a Fundamental," Cromwell declared. On 20th April 1653 he rose from his seat in the House, rated the members for their injustice and selfishness, and concluded with the words, " You are no parliament, I say you are no parliament; I will put an end to your sittings." Turning to Major-General Harrison, he said: " Call them in." Harrison fetched in some twenty musketeers. " Fetch him down," commanded Cromwell. The Speaker Lenthall who had braved Charles I. when the king came to impeach the Five Members in this same parliament eleven years earlier, was helpless now. " What shall we do with this bauble? " said Cromwell looking at the Speaker's mace. Turning to a soldier, he said: " Here, take it away." The rest of the members then left the House; but they never admitted that this was a dissolution, and when Cromwell was dead, they came back to Westminster Hall. At the time, however, the dispersion of the Rump Parliament was thoroughly popular.

There was more political sense in Cromwell and his Council of Officers than there was in the Rump Parliament. They were determined to restore constitutional rule. Their first experiment in this direction was a single-chamber parliament; the members were chosen by the Council of Officers out of a list of names furnished by the church congregations. There were 140 members in all; Scotland and Ireland were represented by five each. The " Little " or " Barebones " Parliament lasted for five months (July to December 1653) without making the needed reforms.

On 16th December 1653 the Instrument of Government, drafted in the Council of Officers, entered into force for " the Government of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and the dominions thereunto belonging." It placed supreme power in the hands of one person, to be called Lord Protector, and of the people assembled in parliament. This parliament was to consist of a single chamber of four hundred members, elected in boroughs according to the old franchise,[1] in counties, by persons possessed of an estate, real or personal, of the value of £200; of these four hundred members, thirty were to be elected in Scotland and thirty in Ireland. The " Christian religion as contained in the Scriptures " was to be " recommended as the public profession," but not popery or prelacy. The Lord Protector was to be assisted by a Council of twenty-one men; his office was elective (by the Council), and was to be held for life. Cromwell was installed as Lord Protector on 16th December 1653, dressed in ordinary civilian clothes, to show that military rule was at an end.

The First Parliament of the Protectorate, held under the Instrument of Government, did not work satisfactorily, at any rate in Cromwell's eyes; after five months' existence (September 1654 to January 1655) it was dissolved by

[1] But " rotten boroughs " were abolished by the Instrument of Government.

him. The condition of the country was still seriously unsettled and there were attempts at Royalist risings. As a temporary expedient, Cromwell divided England into eleven administrative districts and placed a major-general at the head of each (1655–56). This expedient, he declared later, " hath gained us one day more of the lengthening out of our tranquillity ; " he was evidently not very optimistic about the prospects. In September 1656 he summoned the Second Parliament of the Protectorate, which produced a new constitution called The Humble Petition and Advice (25th May 1657). This gave Cromwell the right to nominate his successor as Lord Protector. It also added a second chamber to parliament, which would thus consist of the House of Commons and " the other House : " the Lord Protector was to nominate the members—not more than seventy—of the other House. Hallam rightly observes regarding the Humble Petition and Advice that : " The style is that of subjects addressing a monarch." The original idea of the members of parliament who proposed the Humble Petition was that Cromwell should assume the title of king, and he himself, as his speeches to the Council of Officers show, hankered after the title ; but the Officers would not allow him. Even without the title of king, however, the amendments to the constitution effected by the Humble Petition and Advice approximated the Commonwealth to the old monarchical system ; they were, in fact, a step towards the Restoration.

Parliament met for its second session on 20th January 1658 with the new " other House." The Protector had, naturally, nominated good supporters of himself to be the new " lords," and mainly from the House of Commons. This so weakened his position in the Commons that he found the parliament unmanageable and he dissolved it on 4th February.

The Protectorate was now drawing to a close, only moderately successful in domestic policy, for there was a good deal of royalist and republican disaffection, but a brilliant success in foreign and colonial affairs. In October 1655 Cromwell had made an alliance with France, and thus ensured that Charles II. could not live there. France had been at war with Spain since 1634 when Cardinal Richelieu had entered the Thirty Years War on the Protestant side. The Thirty Years War in Germany came to an end with the Treaties of Westphalia in 1648, but the Franco-Spanish struggle continued, under Richelieu's successor, Cardinal Mazarin. Cromwell, whose attitude to Spain was that of Francis Drake or Richard Grenville, chose the French alliance in order to fight England's " natural enemy." The Commonwealth fleet took Jamaica from the Spaniards in 1655. Six thousand red-coats (the English uniform since the formation of the New Model) fought under Turenne against the Spaniards in Flanders at the battle of the Dunes, 4th June 1658. The Duke of York, younger brother of Charles II. was serving in the Spanish army at this battle. The Franco-British victory at the Dunes brought about the capture of Dunkirk ; this town and

seaport was retained by the Commonwealth as its reward. Cromwell had indeed created a marvellous fighting force of godly men, " This strange force," writes Macaulay, " was irresistible." Cromwell's troops " moved to victory with the precision of machines, while burning with the wildest fanaticism of Crusaders. . . . They at length came to regard the day of battle as a day of certain triumph, and marched against the most renowned battalions of Europe with disdainful confidence."

Nevertheless, though the results of the Protector's foreign policy were generally regarded as brilliant, the sagacious Clarendon was right when he declared in his *History of the Rebellion* that Cromwell, by allying with France against the declining Spanish empire, destroyed the " ancient balance " which had been the security of England. Besides, the policy of holding Dunkirk like another Calais was simply mediæval; the place was worse than useless to England.

In 1658 Cromwell's health was declining. He was attacked by an intermittent fever. George Fox, the Quaker, who was on very good terms with Cromwell, met him on 20th August riding at the head of his guards in Hampton Court Park, which had been presented to him by parliament; " Before I came to him," wrote Fox, " I saw and felt a waft of death go forth against him, and when I came to him he looked like a dead man." The Protector died at Whitehall on 3rd September 1658 aged fifty-nine, having nominated his eldest son Richard as his successor.

Richard Cromwell was Protector for eight months (3rd September 1658 to 5th May 1659). He held one parliament, but finding that the army chiefs were trying to control the government, he refused to precipitate a new civil war and retired. The army chiefs then brought back the members of the Rump Parliament who had never recognised the validity of their forced dissolution in 1653. The Rump, though restored by the Officers, was not disposed to be docile towards them; so the Officers dissolved it again.

The Officers, however, made no success of the work of government and they even had to recall the Rump Parliament (26th December). General George Monk, whom Oliver Cromwell had charged with the command in Scotland nine years before this, made up his mind that the time had come for action. A professional soldier, apparently quite fearless, exceptionally steady, sober, Puritan, unimaginative, Monk always was in the right place at a crisis, and always acted at the most appropriate moment. " Richard Cromwell forsook himself," said Monk, " else had I never failed in my promise to his father." On 2nd January 1660 he crossed the Border with 7000 men drawn from the Scottish garrisons. As he came southwards people welcomed him on all hands and petitions poured in asking for a representative parliament. Fairfax came out of retirement to persuade the chief army officer (of the English

command), General Lambert, not to oppose Monk's advance. On arriving at London, Monk admitted the excluded members (those who survived since Pride's Purge of 1648) to parliament. The genuine Long Parliament was thus reassembled. On 16th March the Long Parliament at last declared its own dissolution and issued writs for a new parliament. Monk's soldiers guarded the freedom of election. On 25th April the new parliament (since known as the Convention as it was not summoned by the crown) met at Westminster, Lords and Commons. Both Houses invited Charles II. to return to England, and the fleet was sent to Holland to bring him over. On 29th May Charles entered London, escorted by 20,000 horse and foot, amidst the utmost enthusiasm.

Two opinions, each representative of their kind, may indicate the result of the Commonwealth upon England. Macaulay writes: "For a time, the evils inseparable from military government were, in some degree, mitigated by the wisdom and magnanimity of the great man who held the supreme command." This was written (or at any rate published) in 1848, when the continental peoples were torn by revolution and threatened with the rise of soldier-dictators. The other opinion is a newspaper notice of the 278th anniversary of Oliver Cromwell's death, the anniversary also of a defeat of the Scots at Dunbar and Worcester: "He ruled the land with soldiers, and he made soldier rule for ever hateful to the people." [1]

[1] *The Daily Express*, 3rd September 1936. This organ is here quoted because it claims to have the world's largest number of daily newspaper readers.

CHAPTER XIX

CHARLES II.

CHARLES II., TOO young to take part in the Great Civil War, had been sent to Paris in 1646, when he was fifteen years old, with the Duke of Buckingham (son of Charles I.'s friend). Thomas Hobbes, the philosopher, was living in Paris then and became the prince's mathematical tutor. Charles, who hated work, seems to have gained an interest in science from Hobbes and later gave him a pension of £100 a year. In 1650–51 in the Scottish campaign against England he had shown courage and coolness at the battle of Worcester and in the long, hunted journey from Worcester to Brighton. During the time of the Commonwealth Charles lived at Paris, until Cromwell's good relations with France made that impossible; Cologne, where the archbishop was an independent prince; and Brussels in the Spanish Netherlands. Like all the English royalists on the Continent he had to live on a small income. His expenses are said to have been about £240 a year; but he did not learn in this school to be either economical or ascetic. The best that can be said of him about this time is that he did not return to England embittered or with his mind closed to the results of the revolution which had taken place. He was clever and adaptable, but he was also lazy and unscrupulous.

The Declaration of Breda (obviously the work of Clarendon), which he had issued on 14th April 1660 before returning to England, promised a free and general pardon to all his subjects who within forty days should declare their return to loyalty, other than any whom parliament should except. Charles also declared " a liberty to tender consciences " and his readiness to consent to an Act of Parliament " for the full granting of that indulgence." The Declaration of Breda was dated " in the twelfth year of our reign," reckoning this to start from the death of Charles I. in 1649. Thus the Acts of the Long Parliament passed since the opening of the Civil War were ignored, but those which were passed in 1640–42 and which received the royal assent of Charles I. remained valid.

The Convention Parliament supplemented Charles II.'s Declaration of Breda with an Act of Indemnity and Oblivion, excepting from the Breda pardon the regicides, that is, the members of the commission which voted the death of Charles I., and five others connected with this. Most of these men were dead or had gone abroad. Such as could be found in England were tried and

thirteen were executed.[1] The second Protector, Richard Cromwell, was on the Continent and lived in Paris and Geneva until 1680, when he was permitted to return. He spent the rest of his life at Cheshunt, an unambitious country gentleman, until his death in 1712. The bones of Oliver Cromwell, however, were not allowed to rest. He had been buried in the chapel of Henry VII. in Westminster Abbey; and now, as Macaulay writes, "those who had fled before him were forced to content themselves with the miserable satisfaction of digging up, hanging, quartering, and burning the remains of the greatest prince that has ever ruled England."

The Convention Parliament, the legislative bridge between the Commonwealth and the reign of Charles II., besides passing the Act of Indemnity and Oblivion, abolished feudal tenures and, consequently, the royal revenue arising therefrom; in their place the excise was substituted. The total revenue of the crown (there still being no separate Civil List for the king's expenses) was fixed at £1,200,000 a year—three times that of James I. and twice that of Charles I. The increase in the crown's revenues and expenses was not out of proportion to the increase in the wealth of the country. In his celebrated third chapter of *The History of England* [2] Macaulay writes:

> It can easily be proved that in our own land the national wealth has, during at least six centuries, been almost uninterruptedly increasing. That it was greater under the Tudors than under the Plantagenets; that it was greater under the Stuarts than under the Tudors; that in spite of battles, sieges, and confiscations, it was greater on the day of the Restoration than on the day when the Long Parliament met; that in spite of maladministration, of extravagance, of public bankruptcy, of two costly and unsuccessful wars, of the pestilence and of the fire, it was greater on the day of the death of Charles the Second than on the day of his Restoration.

It will be observed that in this passage Macaulay refers to the reign of Charles II. as being marked by maladministration, extravagance, public bankruptcy, costly and unsuccessful wars, pestilence, and fire; and all these things, except the last two, could have been averted through the exercise of reasonable foresight and industry. Foresight and industry, however, were not among Charles's qualities. A modern biographer, in a highly interesting and closely documented study,[3] takes a more favourable view of the king's conduct of public affairs than Macaulay does; nevertheless Englishmen are not very proud of the reign.

Like his grandfather James I., Charles II. held, in the first year of his reign, a conference to deal with the persistent breach between Anglicans and Presbyterians; but this, the Savoy Conference, had no more success than had that

[1] In 1660: Harrison, Scott, Scrope, Jones, Clement, Carew, Hacker, Axtel, Peters. In 1662: Barkstead, Corbet, Okey (Hallam, ii. p. 308 n.).

[2] *The History of England*, chap. iii. "State of England in 1685."

[3] Arthur Bryant, *Charles II.* (1934).

famous one at Hampton Court where James I. said: "No Bishop, no King." "Nonconformists" became more and more self-conscious; Anglicans more and more official; until the common danger from "popery" in 1688 did, to some extent, draw them together again.

The Convention Parliament was dissolved on 29th December 1660. A general election was held in the full flush of restored royalism. The new parliament was so conformable to the views of Charles and his court that it gained the name of the Cavalier Parliament; there were only about sixty members of the House of Commons whose political and religious views (the two things were closely connected with each other) might entitle them to be called a Constitutional Opposition party. Charles II. found this parliament so much to his taste that he kept it in being for seventeen years. No legislation was required to restore the pre-Civil War constitution except an Act to repeal the one abolishing episcopal political rights to which Charles I. had assented after he had left London but before he resorted to hostilities (see p. 217). The other Acts of the Cavalier Parliament concerning religion have been called, rather unfairly, the Clarendon Code, after the Lord Chancellor of the time, Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon. The Corporation Act (1661) obliged magistrates to take an oath of non-resistance to the king, and the sacrament according to the rite of the Church of England. The Act of Uniformity (1662) required every beneficed clergyman, fellows of colleges, and schoolmasters to give their assent to everything contained in the Book of Common Prayer. Two thousand Puritan clergy resigned their livings under this Act. The Conventicle Act (1664) prohibited religious meetings other than those allowed by the Church of England; though this Act could not possibly be enforced, it did for a time fill the gaols with nonconformist ministers and with laymen above sixteen years of age. The Five Mile Act (1665) (passed in the session of parliament held at Oxford on account of the Plague in London), required all persons in holy orders, that is, Anglican clergy, to take the oath of non-resistance to the king, on pain of being prohibited from teaching in a school or coming within five miles of a chartered town. All this anti-nonconformist code belonged to the cold-blooded kind of persecution which aims at exterminating people, not by directly massacring them but by depriving them of their means of livelihood. People could not help reflecting that there had been a more tolerant spirit in the government of Protector Oliver Cromwell.

Nor did the results of Charles II.'s conduct of foreign affairs compare favourably with the Cromwellian achievements. The sale of Dunkirk in 1662 to France was a good riddance. The acquisition in the same year (as the dowry of the queen, Catherine of Braganza) of Tangier and Bombay is of importance in the history of the British Empire, though Tangier was not retained very long. Charles's persistent opposition to the Dutch (who had treated him well in his

exile) is explicable by his willingness to sacrifice anybody (outside his own family) for popularity or money. The merchants and speculators wished to gain trade and land from the Dutch. The Commonwealth Navigation Act was re-enacted in 1661 with more stringent conditions. In 1664 Charles sent out, in time of peace, an expedition which captured the Dutch colony of New Netherlands (now New York). This was one of the causes of the Dutch War of 1665, which was popular with the English merchants until the Dutch fleet (12th June 1667) sailed up the Thames, set fire to ships in the mouth of the Medway, and made their guns heard in the city of London while Charles and his ladies were chasing a moth round their supper-table. Next month, 21st July, peace was made, the English retaining New York; for the Dutch were now being threatened by Louis XIV. of France, and so had to make concessions to England. The conducting of the war had been made more difficult for Charles's rather inefficient government by the Great Plague of 1665 and the Great Fire of 1666. The failure in the Dutch War was laid to the charge of Lord Chancellor Clarendon, who was impeached in parliament. He only saved himself by flight (August 1667). The admirable man, with the courtesy of a *grand seigneur*, wrote from Calais to the University of Oxford explaining that he could no longer fulfil his duties as Chancellor of the University. He had now time to complete his *History of the Rebellion.*

On Clarendon's fall Charles gave administration into the hands of five men—Clifford, Arlington, Buckingham, Ashley, Lauderdale—who collectively came to be known as the Cabal. He accepted the advice of his best diplomatist, Sir William Temple, and allowed him to negotiate a Triple Alliance—England, Holland, and Sweden—(23rd January 1668), in order to preserve the integrity of Holland against the encroachments of Louis XIV. The Triple Alliance, however, which looks like a seventeenth-century version of the view that England's frontier is the Rhine, only lasted for about two years; for on 20th May 1670 the incorrigible Charles made the Secret Treaty of Dover, agreeing to join Louis XIV. in war against the Dutch. His reward for this was to be £300,000 down and £200,000 a year, with the condition that he should publicly declare himself a Roman Catholic. The initiative in the negotiations came from Charles, not Louis. Besides money, Charles received from Louis XIV. (though Louis himself was rather puritanical) a new mistress, Louise de Querouaille, created Duchess of Portsmouth. The subsidies were paid by France, though Charles never found a convenient opportunity for declaring his Roman Catholicism. The Treaty of Dover, of course, was simply a conspiracy against a friendly state, and against the established Anglican Church which he had sworn to defend.

In order to keep money for the war that was intended against the Dutch, the Cabal government defaulted (2nd January 1672) on the loans which were due for repayment to the lenders (London goldsmiths) that year, with the

result, of course, that the goldsmiths were not able to meet their engagements to their own clients.

On 15th March of the same year Charles issued a Declaration of Indulgence declaring by his " supreme power in ecclesiastical matters " that all manner of penal laws against whatsoever sort of nonconformists or recusants be immediately suspended." This included Roman Catholic as well as Protestant nonconformists. Parliament forced Charles to withdraw it. A disgraceful attempt was made to seize a Dutch treasure fleet; it failed, and then war was declared upon Holland, March, 1672. Louis XIV. sent his famous marshals and great armies against the Republic. England contributed not only the navy to this war but a military contingent (including the young Churchill), which served under Marshal Turenne. Holland was saved by the heroism of its people, led by the young Prince William III. of Orange. The House of Commons not only insisted upon the withdrawal of the Declaration of Indulgence but passed a Test Act (1673) requiring every holder of public office, civil or military, to make a declaration against Transubstantiation and to take the sacrament according to the rite of the Church of England. The Duke of York, having been received into the Roman Catholic Church in 1672, now resigned his post of Lord High Admiral, and Clifford and Arlington resigned from the Cabal. A new ministry was formed with Sir Thomas Osborne, Earl of Danby, as chief minister. In the following year Danby, earnestly solicited by the House of Commons, made peace with the Dutch (28th February 1674). This was a profound relief to the Dutch, although they had to struggle on to 1678 before they obtained peace with France. Shortly before this, Charles's niece Mary, daughter of James Duke of York, was married to the Prince of Orange (4th November 1677); England then contributed some troops to the Dutch in the last year of their war. The Orange marriage was Danby's great achievement in foreign affairs. Nevertheless he had allowed himself to be persuaded by Charles to negotiate (1676) a Second Secret Treaty of Dover; Charles to receive more money from Louis XIV. in return for an undertaking to prorogue parliament and to be neutral in the Dutch War. When this became known (divulged by Louis XIV. in order to injure Danby), parliament impeached Danby and secured his dismissal (1679). He defended himself with his original letter, initiating the French negotiation, with a postscript in Charles's writing to the effect that Danby had written only at the king's express orders. The House of Commons refused to accept this plea, thus establishing, or at any rate going far to establish, the rule of ministerial responsibility: a minister accepts responsibility for royal Acts which he signs; he can, of course, refuse to sign. A natural result of this system is that the king has to accept the advice of his ministers.

The House of Commons which secured Danby's dismissal was not the " Long Parliament " of Charles II., elected in 1661, for this had at last been dissolved

in January 1679. The new parliament passed the Habeas Corpus Act making statutory and more precise the old Common Law right of Habeas Corpus. Meanwhile, the political crisis associated with the alleged Popish Plot ("divulged" by Titus Oates in 1678) had arisen.

The historian Hume says that there is a perpetual Roman Catholic conspiracy against all non-Roman governments. This was not simply what people believed to be going on in 1679. Hallam is on firmer ground when he writes that " there was really and truly a popish plot in being "—the plot in which Charles II. and Louis XIV. were involved under the Secret Treaties of Dover ; and doubtless there were Roman priests and particularly Jesuits concerned in furthering this royal design. This, however, was not the " plot " that so particularly aroused the House of Commons in 1679. This was the fabrication of a renegade Anglican clergyman called Titus Oates, who, writes Macaulay, " constructed a hideous nonsense, resembling rather the dream of a sick man than any transaction which ever took place in the real world." It was a plot for all-round assassination of the leaders of the State, beginning with the king (although actually he was the chief hope of the Roman Catholics). Corroboration seemed to come when Sir Edmondbury Godfrey, the magistrate who had taken Oates' depositions, was found dead, with marks of violence on him, in a field near London. The whole nation went mad with fear and rage. After unfair trials, a disgrace to the English bench, a number of innocent people were executed.

The important political result of this scare was that in Charles's third parliament, after an excited General Election, a bill was brought forward for the exclusion of the Duke of York from the throne (1679). The Exclusion Bill called forth all the cleverness and whatever energy Charles possessed, for he meant, and worked persistently and successfully, to defeat it. He dissolved his third parliament ; but the fourth parliament took up the Exclusion Bill, which passed the House of Commons, though the Lords rejected it (November 1680). The king dissolved the fourth parliament. The fifth parliament was convened at Oxford, March 1681. The Exclusion Bill was read a second time in the House of Commons. The session, however, only lasted eight days, for Charles dissolved it as the Bill was read (28th March 1681). He took a considerable risk by this, facing the astounded and angry members with dissolution suddenly and quite unexpectedly ; but the stroke succeeded. The members of parliament went home ; their violence, Charles's patience and skill, created a reaction in his favour. From this time, 28th March 1681, to his death on 6th February 1685, Charles II. was an absolute monarch. In these four years he had no parliament at all.

After Danby's fall in 1679, Charles had given over the administration to an able *corps* of ministers of whom the chief were Halifax, Sunderland, Laurence Hyde, and Sidney Godolphin. After 1681 there was no parliament, but for the

time being people as a whole were not dissatisfied. The truth is that the final debates over the Exclusion Bill, and the prevalence of armed men among the parliamentary Opposition at Oxford, had given people a shock. They saw the spectre of civil war hovering over the land again and they recoiled with horror. The advocates of the Exclusion Bill, called the Country Party or Whigs, had gone too far in their opposition to the Court. Their substitute for James Duke of York, if the Exclusion Bill had become law, would have been James Duke of Monmouth, reputed to be the son of Charles and of Lucy Walters, a Welsh woman with whom he associated at the Hague during his exile. For the Whigs to put him forward as their candidate for the throne was a big mistake ; for a year or so he was popular enough and then the reaction set in. Moreover, Charles II., not impetuous like Charles I., not concerned about his dignity or integrity, took no violent steps to vindicate his honour : he had impeached nobody, he had not gone to the House of Commons with a posse of musketeers to seize his leading opponents. On the contrary, he had assented to the Habeas Corpus Act, which was a safeguard for his opponents, and he made no effort to interfere with the Test Act, which kept his Papist friends out of office. And he did not squeeze unparliamentary taxes out of the landed gentry and city merchants ; he merely drew his pension from Louis XIV. until 1684 when Louis stopped payment. As regards his Whig opponents he allowed the law to take its course ; and as some of them had, undoubtedly, involved themselves in treasonable activities, they paid for this after due process of law, with their heads or with exile. Acting strictly within the limits of the law, Charles had *quo warrantos* issued to powerful Whig corporations, beginning with the City of London. The City, having to answer in the Court of King's Bench by what warrant it made its own regulations, was convicted, chiefly with regard to some of its by-laws, of violating its charters. Judgment of forfeiture was declared by the Court of King's Bench, but was not enforced—on condition that the City Corporation submitted its nominations of its officers—mayor, sheriffs, recorder—to royal approval. Other cities and boroughs were dealt with in the same way. The Whig strongholds were broken up.

When certain grave visitors were admitted to pay their respects to King Charles in the great gallery of Whitehall, on the evening of Sunday, 1st February 1685, they found—to their astonishment, though it was quite usual—the place crowded with revellers and gamblers. The king sat " chatting and toying with three women, whose charms were the boast, and whose vices were the disgrace, of three nations." [1] A French page warbled an amorous ditty. At a large table twenty courtiers played cards with mountains of gold as stakes. The king complained of feeling unwell. Five days later, 6th February 1685, he was dead. His behaviour in his last hours was the most comely thing in an ill-spent life.

[1] Macaulay, *History of England*, chap. iv. The three women were Barbara Palmer, Duchess of Cleveland ; Louise de Querouaille, Duchess of Portsmouth ; Hortensia Mancini, Duchess of Mazarin.

Secretly a Roman Catholic, but having outwardly conformed to the Anglican Church, he now ceased from hypocrisy. Refusing the ministrations of Archbishop Sancroft and Bishop Ken, he accepted the offer of James, Duke of York, to fetch a priest. A Benedictine monk, John Huddleston, who had saved his life after the battle of Worcester, and who had for this reason been allowed to live unharmed in London since the Restoration, was admitted into the king's room. He heard the king's confession and administered the sacrament to him. Charles's last remarks to various people, all carefully recorded, were considerate for other people's interests. He maintained his exquisite urbanity to the last.

Hallam's judgment on the constitutional aspect of these twenty-five years since the Restoration is: "The reign of Charles II., though displaying some stretches of arbitrary power and threatening a great deal more, was, in fact, the transitional state between the ancient and modern schemes of the English constitution." In the modern constitution, the king accepts the advice of the cabinet of ministers tendered through the prime minister; the cabinet itself harmonises with the majority in the House of Commons; and the electorate ultimately controls parliament and ministers through sending one party or another with a majority to the House of Commons. In the reign of Charles II. these features are seen, but rudimentary in form, not explicitly recognised by everybody as part and parcel of the constitution. Nevertheless the essentials of "constitutional government" are there. The House of Commons took to appropriating supplies to particular objects in 1665—in this case it was appropriation for the expenses of the Dutch War. With appropriation of supply there naturally was joined audit of the account: both were suggested by Sir George Downing, a graduate of Harvard College, Massachusetts, who became a teller of the exchequer in 1680 and whose work is commemorated in Downing Street. Pepys noted in his Diary that the demand of a parliament for audit of accounts "makes the king and court mad," but it had to be conceded. The fall of Danby in 1679 involved the principle of ministerial responsibility to parliament for the acts of the king. The Cabal ministry of 1667 was not a Cabinet in the modern sense of the word, but it was the beginning of a Cabinet. And the two "great historic parties," the Whigs and Tories, took definite form in this reign.

The origin of the English political parties is probably to be sought in the first two years of the Long Parliament, when the two Houses practically divided themselves into Court and Opposition. In the Long Parliament of Charles II. the terms Court Party and Country Party seem to have been correctly used. By-elections and general elections were contested by gentry who supported the court policy or who followed Anthony Ashley Cooper, the leader of those who opposed the court policy, the heart and soul of the campaign for the Exclusion Bill. In 1679–81 when Charles hesitated to summon a parliament,

Unknown Artist.

Reproduced by Courtesy of The National Portrait Gallery.

CHARLES II.

petitions flowed in to the crown from people who were in or who sympathised with the country party, begging that parliament might be summoned; but more courtly people, who believed in the Divine Right of kings, testified to their abhorrence of this pressure put upon the crown. Country party and court party, petitioners and abhorrers, began to assume their now historic names, Whig and Tory, each name being a cant and contemptuous name applied by one party to the other. The court party called its opponents Whigs, taking this name from the Presbyterian covenanters, fanatics who fought against Charles II.'s episcopal system in Scotland. The country party called the courtiers Tories, Papist Irishmen who defended their out-of-date principles in the bogs of Munster or Connaught. The names " stuck " and were adopted by those against whom they were thrown as honourable badges signifying honour and honourable principles. The two parties differed from each other sufficiently to ensure energetic and determined competition for the suffrages of the electors; but they did not differ so profoundly as to break into civil war against each other. Anthony Ashley Cooper was the first man to see the possibility of organising elections in the constituencies along party lines. He used the coffee-houses, which had become since the Restoration the popular meeting-places of people for talking, reading the news-sheets, and exchanging views. A group of men of congenial political views, meeting in their favourite coffee-house, in the city of London, in Bristol, in Norwich, became a political club. Registers of names were gradually established, committees formed. Soon people began to " stand " as Whigs or as Tories. Party politics had begun.

CHAPTER XX

THE REVOLUTION

IN THE " EIGHTEEN-THIRTIES " political historians, particularly Guizot, who was an authority on English seventeenth-century history, were fond of comparing the Stuarts with the Bourbons, and William III. with Louis Philippe. They pointed out that the restored and tolerant Charles II. was like the restored Louis XVIII. (1814) who believed that when the king had dined all France was happy. And Charles's fanatic brother, James II., who lost the crown because he violated the country's religious liberties, was like Louis XVIII.'s priest-ridden brother Charles X. who suspended the constitution (1830) and, after an almost bloodless revolution, went into exile. The comparison between William III. and Louis Philippe, kings by invitation and by act of the legislature, was equally striking. Pursued further, however, the comparison broke down, for Louis Philippe, though he had a large family, failed to establish his line on the throne; but William of Orange, who had no children, left an assured throne to his sister-in-law Anne.

The history of the Commonwealth and Protectorate proved that the English and Scottish were thoroughly monarchial in sentiment. The Stuart family was not popular, but the crown was. In the last years of Charles II., however, the Stuart king was popular. Opposition was quenched. The reaction in the king's favour after the Exclusion Bill was by no means exhausted. A very strong and capable ministry was in office. The people were loyal; the army, small (about 5000 men) was efficient; local government was functioning well; trade was good. In a little over three years James II. threw away all these advantages.

The characters of Charles II. and James II. were very different. Charles was clever but indolent. The only thing upon which he really expended care and method was his health. He rose early, spent two or three hours in the open air, walked long and fast, putting his courtiers out of breath as he strode along with them. The mistake he made, wrote Halifax, was that he thought this physical regimen was more reconcilable with his pleasure than it really was. He never read anything, but thought to acquire all that he wanted from conversation. " He hated business," wrote Bishop Burnet, though when he did set himself to it, " he would stay as long as his ministers had work for him." He had a good memory, was " an everlasting talker," with a fund of witty stories, though he bored his courtiers a good deal, especially by telling

the same stories on successive days. He wished to be absolute and to restore Roman Catholicism and he was quite ruthless; but as his fundamental principle —this is Halifax's explanation—was the *love of ease*, he could not pursue power, or support Roman Catholicism, or indulge in vengeance to the point of risking his throne. As an exiled prince he had learned to be a dissembler; and as king he went on dissembling.

James II. has been described by Bishop Burnet, who knew him as well as Charles II., in opposite terms. "He was naturally candid and sincere and a firm friend, till affairs and his religion wore out all his first principles and inclinations. He had a great desire to understand affairs; and in order to do that he kept a constant journal of all that passed, of which he showed me a great deal." The Duke of Buckingham once said to Burnet: "The King (Charles II.) could see things if he would; the Duke (James II.) would see things if he could." Quite as dissolute as Charles II., "he was perpetually in one amour after another, without being very nice in his choice: upon which the king (Charles II.) said once, he believed his brother had his mistresses given him by his priests for penance." As Lord High Admiral, "he came to understand all the concerns of the sea very particularly." Nevertheless Burnet held that James's influence upon the navy was bad.

> The Duke found all the great seamen had a deep tincture from their education. They both hated Popery and loved liberty. They were men of severe tempers, and kept good discipline. But in order to the putting the fleet into more competent hands, the Duke began a method of sending pages of honour, and other young persons of quality, to be bred to the sea. And these were put in command as soon as they were capable of it, if not sooner. This discouraged many of the old seamen, when they saw in what channel advancement was like to go; who upon that left the service and went and commanded merchantmen. By this means the virtue and discipline of the navy is much lost.

When he became king, James started doing the same thing for the army. He granted a commission to a Roman Catholic, Sir Edward Hales, and then arranged (1686) that a collusive suit should be brought against Hales under the Test Act of 1673. The decision was in favour of Hales on the ground that the crown could dispense him from the disability under the Test Act. Armed with this favourable decision, James appointed more and more Roman Catholics to command in the army, including in the end the commander-in-chief, an Irishman, Richard Talbot, Earl of Tyrconnell. He increased the size of the army from Charles II.'s 5000 to about 20,000.

In 1685, the year in which James succeeded to the throne, Louis XIV. revoked the Edict of Nantes under which, since 1598, the Huguenots had been tolerated in France. It is not unreasonable to suppose that James II. was influenced by this example to undertake the task, a Grand Design, to restore

Roman Catholicism in England. It may be that he only designed (as his Declaration of Indulgence implied) to have Roman Catholicism tolerated along with the Protestant Churches; but his imposition of Romanists in high places such as the headships of University College and Magdalen College looks like a scheme for more than simply mutual toleration. His policy, curiously, did not win the approval of the Roman Catholic powers; apparently they feared—and if so they were right—that he would only provoke the stubborn islanders into an intensely anti-Catholic reaction. Both Pope Innocent XI. and Charles II. of Spain sent messages of caution. The Spanish message to James was "that he might be at unity with his people and of good intelligence with his parliament." James told the Privy Council which he held as king on the day his brother died, that he was resolved to maintain the established government in Church and State. He summoned parliament, but apologised to the French ambassador, Barillon, for doing so. "Assure your master," he said, "of my gratitude and attachment. I know that without his protection I can do nothing. I know what troubles my brother brought on by not adhering steadily to France. I will take good care not to let the Houses meddle with foreign affairs." The result of this communication was the reception of a subsidy from Louis XIV. of 500,000 livres, equal to about £37,500. The king sent Lord Churchill, the best known of the younger English soldiers, as ambassador extraordinary to the court of Versailles, conveying James's message of gratitude for the subsidy.

At first James was not unpopular. His first parliament, elected freely in May 1685, had a Tory, a "Church and King" majority. The prosecution of Titus Oates and Dangerfield for perjury in the "Popish Plot" affair, and the frightful floggings inflicted on them by Lord Chief Justice Jeffreys and his colleagues, were criticised by the Whigs but seem to have been approved by the Tories. The prosecution and sentence of imprisonment (also inflicted by Chief Justice Jeffreys) of Richard Baxter for writing against the persecution of dissenters was injudicious. Baxter, the author of *The Saints' Everlasting Rest*, was a Puritan Anglican, and had been offered the Bishopric of Hereford (which he declined) by Charles II. He was now (1685) seventy years old. In Scotland a furious persecution of the Presbyterian Covenanters was undertaken under James II.'s authority by John Graham of Claverhouse, whose dragoons harried, with peculiar but unavailing venom, the peasantry of the Western Lowlands: they refused to conform to the Caroline episcopacy.

In May, 1685, an expedition was fitted out by Scottish refugees in Holland, led by Archibald Campbell, ninth Earl of Argyll, a Covenanter, in support of the claim of the Duke of Monmouth to the throne. The expedition landed in the Campbell country in Kintyre, and made its way south, without receiving any support. Argyll was captured and executed.

In June (1685) the Duke of Monmouth himself came from Holland with an

expedition of three ships, and landed in England, at Lyme Regis. He issued a proclamation declaring James II. a usurper and himself the true heir. He appealed to the Protestant sentiment of the country. The West-countrymen—not the gentry, but the burgesses, yeomen, and peasantry—were Whigs, with the "Roundhead" tradition from the time of the Civil War. Monmouth, handsome and fascinating in manner, became popular in the West; and the peasantry from Dorset and Somerset came to his standard, only to be massacred by Feversham's and Churchill's regiments on Sedgemoor, 6th July 1685.

The Monmouth rebellion was the beginning of the end of James's reign. Rebels have to be met and, if possible, defeated by the government; but the savage vengeance taken on high and low—and particularly on the lowly people—after the defeat of the insurrection, opened the minds of the people to perception of the tyrant that James was. Judge Jeffrey's "Bloody Assize" in the West Country, and the licensed horror of Colonel Kirke's "lambs" (the Tangier Regiment which had a Paschal Lamb on its standard) quartered on the people there, made people shudder all over England. Three hundred people were hanged for rebellion, and eight hundred and forty-one were transported as slaves to labour on plantations in the West Indies. After all expenses of transportation were paid, these white slaves were worth £10 to £15 apiece. The courtiers engaged with zest in this horrible traffic. The only way in which James II.'s queen, Mary of Modena, the second wife, whom he had married in 1673, is known to have used her influence with him in regard to the rebels, was to ask for a hundred of them. They were shipped to the West Indies, and she is believed to have made £1000 out of the transaction.

James was at the summit of power in July 1685, after the rout of Monmouth's army at Sedgemoor. From that moment, however, beginning with the horror of his revenge, there ensued a kind of rake's progress. He threw away the loyalty of the people, even the allegiance of extreme Tories, by attacking one cherished institution after another—the universities, the Church, the town corporations. His recklessness is difficult to explain. It is hard to believe that he was impelled by Roman Catholic zeal, if the Pope, the king of Spain, and (it appears) the bigoted Louis XIV. tried to moderate or check his actions. Nor can it be explained by a passion for religious toleration in general; because his persecution of the Covenanters in Scotland, when he commanded there before coming to the throne and afterwards, was simply frightful—and the Covenanters of this period were not political: all they wanted was to be able to worship in their Presbyterian congregations. The only explanation compatible with all the known facts is that James had the disease of inflated or exaggerated will-power; the disease that sometimes comes from the exercise of enormous power; the passion for dominance which turns a man into a power-maniac, incapable of accepting any limit. This power-mania or tyrant mentality is a familiar feature of the

history of all despotisms, for instance in the later Roman Empire or the Russian Tsardom of the eighteenth century; and it has commonly ended with a conspiracy in the palace or a revolution in the country.

The means by which James II. set out to complete his despotism was not the Roman Catholic Church in England—that was only one of the ways in which his despotism was expressed—but the army. As Oliver Cromwell had dominated England by means of the New Model Army, so James was going to do so by the Great Army which he collected and exercised in a standing camp on Hounslow Heath. The case of Hales gave James the opportunity of gradually remodelling the commissioned ranks of the army to suit his views.

The steps of James towards his fatal crisis followed rapidly one after the other. Halifax, the "Trimmer," whose political interests were in the liberties of the subject, and Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester, who was a cavalier of the old "Church and King" school, left the ministry, or were dismissed (1685). The Earl of Sunderland, a pliant man, remained as President of the Council and head of the ministry; he was useful to James at this time, but he was too capable, far-sighted, and ambitious to submit to be for long an instrument of despotism.

In 1686 James, by proclamation, re-established the ecclesiastical Court of High Commission which had been abolished in 1641; he placed the ferocious Judge Jeffreys at its head. When Obadiah Walker, Master of University College, Oxford, declared himself a Roman Catholic, James instructed the Solicitor-General to issue a deed authorising Walker to hold his office notwithstanding the Test Act. The Deanery of Christ Church, Oxford, fell vacant: this is a royal appointment. James nominated Massey, a Roman Catholic. In Ireland the military power was placed in the hands of the papist Tyrconnell, a violent, forceful man. The conversion of John Dryden, poet laureate (whose pension and annual butt of malmsey James had stopped) to Roman Catholicism was variously interpreted as a kind of success for James. Dryden's emoluments as laureate were renewed; he published a long poem, *The Hinde and the Panther, a Defence of the Roman Church* (1687,) in which Rome is depicted as a persecuted, milk-white hind, and the Church of England as a beautiful, predatory panther.

In April 1687, James issued a Declaration of Indulgence, suspending all penal laws against Nonconformists, and authorising Roman Catholics and Protestant Dissenters to worship in public. The declaration applied only to England, but a proclamation of toleration was also made in Edinburgh to apply to Scotland. Richard Baxter was released from prison. Some prominent Protestant dissenters, including William Penn, the courtly Quaker, founder and owner of Pennsylvania, thanked the king for his indulgence. John Bunyan, the Baptist tinker of Bedfordshire, whose *Pilgrim's Progress* had appeared in 1678 and who had spent in prison twelve out of the twenty-seven years

since the accession of Charles II., could now preach to his crowded congregations without danger; nevertheless he refused to acknowledge the legality of the Indulgence The majority of the Protestant dissenters took the same view.

The Archbishopric of York falling vacant, James is believed only to have been prevented by Pope Innocent XI. from nominating the Jesuit Father Petre to the See. A Papal Nuncio was received at St. James's. On 4th July 1687 the only parliament of the reign was dissolved. The Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge, Dr John Pechell, was deprived of his office for refusing to admit a monk, Alban Francis, to the degree of M.A. Pechell put forward the defence that he was bound to refuse admission to any candidate for a degree who refused to take the oath under the Statute of Supremacy. One of the Fellows who supported the Vice-Chancellor in his defence before Judge Jeffreys and the Court of High Commission was Isaac Newton of Trinity College, Cambridge, and President of the Royal Society; he did not suffer for this. Far otherwise was the treatment of the Fellows of Magdalen College, Oxford. On a vacancy in the headship of the college, they refused to elect (15th April 1687), after receiving a royal letter, Anthony Farmer, a former member of the College, who had been converted to Roman Catholicism. The elections in Magdalen were, by the charter and statutes of the College, in the hands of the Fellows. Farmer was ineligible on several grounds; but whether eligible or not, it made no difference in this case; election was in the sole competence of the Fellows of the College. They met, as directed in their statutes, in the College Chapel, and they elected John Hough to be their President. Cited before the Court of High Commission at Whitehall, they refused to be browbeaten by Judge Jeffreys. The king gave up the attempt to force the execrable Farmer on them, and nominated instead to be their head Dr Parker, Bishop of Oxford. President Hough refused to give up his office and was expelled along with thirty-eight of the Fellows (except two who conformed to the king) from the College. The king then nominated, not Dr Parker, but Bonaventure Gifford, a Roman Catholic bishop, to be President of Magdalen, with twelve Roman Catholic Fellows. The Roman services were performed in the College Chapel. Oxford University and the Colleges did not wield a great social influence then as they do now, but their influence upon the Church of England was potent and, through the Church, upon the Tory gentry. In attacking Oxford, James was sure to meet, not merely there, but in other quarters, prolonged and dangerous resistance. Just before William of Orange invaded England, James restored the expelled Fellows of Magdalen—too late.

The device used by Charles II. for influencing parliamentary elections—the remodelling of the boroughs—was employed by James, without great success. Some boroughs surrendered their charters and received new documents, greatly reducing the number of electors: but many refused. Before, however, any

parliamentary elections were held under the new charters, matters had come to a crisis. On 27th April 1688 the king issued a second Declaration of Indulgence reaffirming the declaration made twelve months earlier. It attracted little notice. "It contained nothing new; and men wondered that the king should think it worth while to publish a solemn manifesto merely for the purpose of telling them that he had not changed his mind." [1] Macaulay suggests that it may have been irritation at this indifference which induced the king to make an Order in Council (4th May 1688) to the effect that the Declaration should be read on two successive Sundays by the officiating ministers of all churches and chapels of the kingdom. Most of the Protestant nonconformist clergy of London refused to read it. The bishops of the archidiocese of Canterbury, meeting at Lambeth, also, with few exceptions, came to the same decision. Archbishop Sancroft drafted a petition to the king, expressing the view that the Declaration of Indulgence was illegal, and therefore could not be, in conscience, read in the churches. The petition was signed by the archbishop and six bishops, Lloyd of St Asaph, Turner of Ely, Lake of Chichester, Ken of Bath and Wells, White of Peterborough, and Trelawney of Bristol (18th May 1688). The bishops took it to Whitehall and presented it to the king who, on reading it, exclaimed: "This is a standard of rebellion. You are trumpeters of sedition." Nevertheless the bishops stood to their resolution. When the appointed day came, Sunday, 20th May, the Declaration was read in few churches; when the officiating minister started to read it in Westminster Abbey, the congregation left the church. After considerable hesitation James, on the advice of Judge Jeffreys, decided that the seven bishops should be brought before the Court of King's Bench on a charge of seditious libel. On 8th June they were committed to the Tower. On 10th June the queen was delivered of a son at St James's Palace. This event brought public excitement, already aroused by the case of the seven bishops, to a pitch of the highest intensity; for it meant that people could no longer wait for James's death and the accession of his elder daughter, Mary, Princess of Orange. The trial of the bishops was followed eagerly by the whole country. On 30th June, in a breathless stillness, the jury pronounced the verdict, not guilty. The whole country, as the news spread, burst out into raptures and cheers.

Certain eminent Whigs were now engaged on plans for bringing over William of Orange, who had been watching events carefully and had an agent in England. He was thirty-eight years old, and a Protestant. As Stadtholder of the Dutch Republic he had an interest in England which, in Roman Catholic hands, could be a great danger to his country. He would not, however, move without an invitation from England. On 30th June 1688, the day of the acquittal of the seven bishops, an invitation to William was drafted and was signed by

[1] Macaulay, *History of England*, i. p. 497.

John Riley

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JAMES II.

seven Whigs of influence who promised to join him if he came. The names of those brave men were Henry Sidney, later Earl of Romney; Thomas Osborne, Earl of Danby; William Cavendish, Earl of Devonshire; Charles Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury; Dr Compton, Bishop of London; and Lord Lumley. Admiral Herbert, later Earl of Torrington, disguised as a common sailor, took the invitation to the Hague. William was now satisfied, but considerable time was required for preparations, particularly as his country might at any moment be involved in war with Louis XIV. James felt the ground shake under his feet. His soldiers were disaffected, some mutinous. He had to break up the great camp on Hounslow Heath and disperse the soldiers in various garrisons. To compensate for his weak hold over the English army, he brought some Irish regiments over. "Of the many errors which James committed," writes Macaulay, "none was more fatal than this." All England was singing or whistling a song called "Lillibulero," satirising the Irish soldiers and the policy of the king. Louis XIV. of France, who by a powerful military demonstration could easily have stopped William's departure for England, offered help which James, strangely, refused with indignation. Louis accordingly, perhaps in order to give a lesson to James, with the prospect of restoring the fugitive king later to England, sent his army off to Cologne and to the upper Rhine. On Thursday (1st November 1688) William of Orange put out to sea with 50 Dutch warships and, it is said, 550 other ships, under the command, not of a Dutchman, but of Admiral Herbert. They passed the Straits of Dover and entered the Channel. On 5th November William landed in Torbay at Brixham. The first troops to land were British regiments, mainly Scotsmen, in the Dutch service; but most of the troops in the expedition were Dutch. They marched from Newton Abbot to Exeter. King James went down with an army to Salisbury to defend his kingdom, but there was rebellion in the north, and many people were joining William in the south. William advanced. Some skirmishes took place between his troops and James's, chiefly between James's unpopular Irish regiments and the British regiments in the Dutch service. There was conspiracy inside the king's army; and on 1st December General Churchill escaped to the quarters of William of Orange. The royal army retreated from Salisbury. The Princess Anne (James's second daughter), whose bosom friend was Churchill's wife, fled from London to the northern insurgents. On 10th December James sent his queen and son off to France. On 17th December William arrived, without opposition, in London.

William treated James II. as Cromwell and his colleagues should have treated Charles I.—let him go out of the country. On the night of 21st to 22nd December James left Rochester in a smack. He arrived safely in France, and found his queen and son at the château of Saint Germains. Louis XIV. treated him with the utmost consideration and gave him a pension equal to

£45,000 a year. In England a general election was held, and a parliament, called the Convention, met on 22nd January 1689. The House of Commons resolved that King James the Second, having endeavoured to subvert the constitution of the kingdom by breaking the original contract between king and people, had abdicated the government and that the throne had thereby become vacant.

PART III

REVOLUTION KINGSHIP

(1688-1837)

CHAPTER I

THE SUBSTITUTES

William III. of Orange: 1689–1702
Mary II.: 1689–1694
Anne: 1702–1714

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE to understand and appreciate William III. as King of England without some knowledge of the events in his life prior to his landing at Torbay in 1688. Those events shaped the course of his policy, whether as Stadtholder of the Dutch Republic or as King of England: they transformed him into a statesman whose outlook was essentially European rather than national. An intense love for Holland unquestionably began the process of change: the security of his native land called for a nicely adjusted balance of power between the chief members of the European states system; and throughout his life he worked untiringly to preserve that balance of power, never hesitating, when it was upset by the ambitions of a Louis XIV. of France, to maintain the proper readjustments by means of war.

William was born "a full month out of due time" on the 14th November 1650 in the Binnenhof at the Hague. The shadow of death enshrouded his home: eight days before his birth, his father, William II. of Orange, had died of the smallpox; and with him had perished his schemes for the uniting of the Dutch provinces under the strong rule of a Prince of Orange. William's mother was an English princess, Mary, the eldest daughter of Charles I. She was only nineteen years old when motherhood came to her; and her young life was already saddened by the misfortunes which had overtaken her family.

The Dutch burghers must have rejoiced at the death of Prince William II. No longer would their cherished privileges be threatened by a Prince of Orange whose chief allies were the common people. Long before the baby upon whom devolved the leadership of the Orange party grew to manhood they would have consolidated their position so that it could never again be assailed. Fortune favoured the oligarchs' plans. After 1652 the control of Holland, the largest and richest of the provinces in the Dutch republic, passed into the hands of the Grand Pensionary John de Witt, a resolute politician of cultured tastes. It was to this man that the future William III. owed his fine political training. De Witt saw that the young boy was served by competent tutors; and when he grew up the Grand Pensionary himself talked long with him about politics

and the needs of the Dutch people. Of the precise nature of William's early education little is known; but he was accounted a first-rate linguist, speaking Dutch, French, German, and English, and also possessing a working knowledge of Latin, Italian, and Spanish; and he was adept in warlike exercises.

His birth was followed by a sharp struggle for the control of his person. Young though his mother was she was a high-spirited, imperious girl; and she had no wish to share with anyone a mother's natural authority over her son. Mary's mother-in-law, Amalia von Solms-Braunsberg, failed to see how an English princess who hated her Dutch home could understand and appreciate the Orange tradition; and she contested the mother's claim to sole guardianship. In this Amalia was supported by her son-in-law, the talented Elector Frederick William of Brandenburg; and in the end it was decided that the three disputants should become William's joint guardians.

But if in William's early years fortune seemed to smile on the narrow parochial policy of the oligarchs, the inexorable march of events carried him nearer and nearer to the goal of leadership which the Orange family believed to be the heritage of its head. With ordinary Dutch people the name of Orange was identified with national greatness; and the memories of past Orange achievements were infinitely sweeter than the tales told by the burgher oligarchs of the commercial prosperity which had come to the provinces since they controlled their destinies. Many a simple Dutchman could recall how in the interests of commercial prosperity, the effect of which was felt by the rich burghers and not by the ordinary people, national honour had been besmirched; and their hearts went out to the family whose members had fought and bled to keep the national honour bright and clean. Moreover, Orange stood for the simple Calvinism which ordinary men in the Dutch provinces regarded as the essential antidote against the Romish doctrines so assiduously practised and preached by their Spanish enemies.

It was significant that when William was only three years old there was a movement to have him appointed Captain-general and Admiral-general, and that his uncle, William Frederick of Nassau, should deputise for him until he was eighteen years old. De Witt scotched that movement; but his action was not popular; and the rioting which followed was the natural resentment of a leaderless populace against a system of government conducted for the benefit of a privileged merchant class. The failure of the government to maintain the national honour during the Anglo-Dutch maritime war again increased the Orange prestige; and nothing infuriated the people against de Witt more than his agreement to the English demand that no Prince of Orange in the future should hold the offices of Stadtholder and Captain-general in the province of Holland (Act of Exclusion). In fairness to de Witt it must be said that no other alternative was open to him. Cromwell was insistent upon

this condition. It was his precaution against an Orange-Stuart combination which might operate to secure the overthrow of the Commonwealth government.

The Stuart restoration in 1660 influenced the future of the young William, in that it made his uncle Charles II. the ruler of a powerful neighbouring state —and, what appealed to the commercial interests, a state whose geographical position gave her easy control over the maritime highroads along which Dutch commerce passed to home ports. The death of the boy's mother during a visit to England in December 1660 gave rise to another squabble about his guardianship. Charles II. had already mildly suggested to de Witt that something ought to be done to make William a person of greater importance in the republic; but the States of Holland were still obsessed with the fear that such a move might open the floodgates to a revival of Orange domination; and whatever de Witt's personal inclinations may have been at that time, he was nevertheless compelled to bow to his party's wishes to let matters stand where they were. The result was that Amalia von Solms-Braunsberg was given control over her grandson.

The justification of the oligarchic system of government was its benevolent commercial policy: it was quite unfitted successfully to make war. The first of the Anglo-Dutch maritime wars left the honours in English hands; but it did not end the commercial rivalry of the two countries; and when a second war was fought in 1665–67 the Dutch could fairly claim that the raid on the English naval forces in the Medway gave them slightly the better of the struggle. The popular party in the Dutch provinces maintained that a more effective prosecution of the war would have resulted in a more decisive result; and the blame for this failure to uphold the national honour was laid upon the oligarchs. Once again shouts were raised in favour of nominating William as the commander-in-chief of the land and sea forces; and in April 1666, while the struggle with England was at its height, de Witt, recognising that something must be done to allay the popular discontent, persuaded the States of Holland to become responsible for William's education. In effect, it was a victory for the Orange party in that it recognised that William was different from other Dutch youths.

De Witt saw in the popular demand that William ought to be given high state office the writing on the wall for the system of oligarchy; and he was courageous enough to induce his friends to make concessions. The situation was indeed a delicate one: few members of the party to which de Witt belonged shared his views; and the memory of past Orange attempts to control the destinies of the constituent provinces obscured all other considerations of policy. But de Witt finally managed to hammer out a compromise. The States of Holland passed the Perpetual Edict whereby the offices of Stadtholder and Captain-general were for ever separated; and this arrangement was confirmed

in an Act of Harmony by the States-General representing all the provinces in the republic.

Suddenly a new situation arose. In 1667 Louis XIV. went to war with Spain, and French regiments were sent to occupy the Spanish Netherlands. This was a bitter blow for de Witt, for two years earlier he had made an alliance with France; and since his conception of friendship did not extend to neighbourliness, he quickly negotiated a counter-alliance with England and Sweden in 1668. This was a complete reversal of Dutch foreign policy: it might conveniently be taken as the starting-point for William's relentless opposition to Louis XIV.'s grandiose schemes of territorial aggrandisement. English statesmen of the calibre of Sir William Temple were as eager as de Witt for this Triple Alliance: they recognised that France and not Spain was the menace to the peace of western Europe. The purpose of this alliance—to compel Louis to desist from his attack upon Spain—was achieved. But Louis was determined to punish "messieurs les marchands," as he contemptuously called the Dutch oligarchs, for having thwarted his plan to seize the Spanish Netherlands; and he at once set to work to smash the Triple Alliance.

His success represents one of the most discreditable incidents in English history—the Treaty of Dover of 1670. England and France solemnly undertook to attack the Dutch: more sinister was the secret engagement between Charles and Louis whereby French aid was promised in the English king's attempt to coerce his subjects to accept popery. Louis and Charles had arranged that William should receive a semi-independent principality, and consequently the young Dutch prince was invited to visit his uncle so that the proposal might be laid before him. It was William's first introduction to the land over which he was destined to rule, and he won golden opinions from his future subjects. They liked his seriousness of purpose; and Oxford and Cambridge conferred honorary degrees upon him. But Charles himself was bitterly disappointed with his nephew: he found him a bigoted Calvinist, and a Dutch "boor;" and it is very doubtful whether he acquainted him with the schemes concocted by Louis and himself.

War was declared on the Dutch republic in March 1672. In the previous month de Witt, somewhat reluctantly it is true, bowed to the popular demand that William should be appointed Captain-general and Admiral-general; but he tried to maintain the oligarchic point of view by limiting the appointment to the period of the coming campaign; and was completely outwitted by William when he announced that he would not accept the appointment unless it was made permanent at the end of his twenty-second year. It was a thankless task which confronted the young man: his country was completely isolated, and she was ill-prepared for war. There was a bitter outcry in the country against the rule of the oligarchic government. In the rioting which followed

de Witt was wounded; and on 20th August with his brother Cornelis was brutally assassinated. It was hinted that William was implicated in the plot against the de Witts; but there is no evidence of this. He did admit that he was relieved by the removal of John de Witt: he even rewarded with a pension one who was known as an implacable enemy of the murdered man; but to those nearest to him he confessed that the murder filled him "with the greatest horror possible."

William was no match for the French generals operating against him; but adversity taught him to be patient, and the tradition of his family demanded a dogged resistance to the onward march of the attackers. Flooding their lands the Dutch retired into the heart of their country; and protected by an inundated countryside William was able to get the Dutch fighting forces into proper trim for what obviously would be a protracted struggle. Severe frost during the winter froze the protecting waters, and when news came that the French were advancing across the ice, it seemed inevitable that the little republic would be overwhelmed by superior numbers; but a sudden thaw drove them helter-skelter back beyond the water line, and William was left free to continue his preparations for the campaign during the coming spring. What he stood most in need of was allies; and to make good this deficiency he opened negotiations with Spain and the Empire. Both states joined him in October 1673; and in the following month he led a strong force of cavalry behind the French lines to assist the Imperial troops to take Bonn. The raid was a magnificent piece of daring: his fellow-countrymen could deny him nothing, and his enemies applauded his courage.

The war was never popular in England, and in 1674, Charles II. was driven to desert his friend Louis and conclude a separate peace. At the same time Brandenburg withdrew from her engagements with the French king and joined William. In consequence Louis was left to continue the struggle with Sweden as his only ally. For four years longer the war dragged on; neither side could claim spectacular victories; it was essentially a war of sieges. To state that William showed himself an outstanding general would be an exaggeration; but his dogged determination completely disconcerted the French; and his refusal to accept terms which were not satisfactory to his country increased his already great popularity in his own country. Again uncle Charles of England tried to play an underhand game: his emissaries to the Hague were instructed to persuade William that Louis was his friend and the Emperor his enemy; and efforts were made to draw off the latter from the Dutch cause. But the rather boorish Dutch nephew whom Charles in his heart of hearts despised neatly turned the tables on his uncle when he sought and obtained the hand of Mary, the daughter of James Duke of York, the English king's brother. He dashed to England to marry her on 4th November 1677; at the same time he

let his uncle know clearly the basis on which he was prepared to make peace with Louis.

Dutchmen were convinced that William was the saviour of their country, and they were willing to bestow upon him rewards fitting to his services. One province, Gueldres, went so far as to offer him the title of Duke, which was the abnegation of the republican principles so dear to the Dutch people (1673); and in January 1674 de Witt's successor, Caspar Fagel, initiated the constitutional movement which ultimately led towards making the office of Stadtholder hereditary to William and his male descendants. Extreme republicans deprecated the form which this hero-worship took, and they were not averse to conspiring with Louis to clip William's wings—and to secure a return to the good old system of oligarchy. The cost of the war made it unpopular with the commercial interests in the province of Holland, and in their assembly they advocated the opening of negotiations with the French. This lead was followed by other provinces in the States-General; and the result was the Peace of Nymegen (August 1678).

William, doggedly upholding his country's honour in the field, was bitterly disappointed by this turn of events: Nymegen destroyed all his cherished hopes, for allies were shamefully deserted and the French were left in possession of most of the famous Barrier Fortresses. He was, however, hardened to disappointments: although little support could be expected from "messieurs les marchands" he was determined to make it impossible for the French to extend their frontiers at the expense of the Low Countries. His difficulties were seemingly insuperable. French agents intrigued with his political opponents, ridiculing his fears that their country menaced Dutch independence; and the die-hard republicans again paraded the bogey of an Orange domination detrimental to Dutch interests. William met these rebuffs with little show of resentment, and quietly went on with his great work of forming a coalition capable of thwarting Louis' plans. In 1681 he registered his first real success when he bound the Empire, Spain, Sweden, and his own country into an association for the maintenance of existing treaties; and four years later, when Louis revoked the Edict of Nantes and James II. became king of England, even the merchants of Amsterdam awoke to the grim truth that the Dutch republic was being encircled by popish states. With the tales of the Holy Inquisition's terror fresh in their memory they saw the force of William's repeated warnings; and in 1686 stood solidly at his back when he managed by patient diplomacy to form an alliance between Brandenburg, the Empire, Spain, Sweden, and his own country for the maintenance of the Peace of Nymegen.

The events of James II.'s reign have already been dealt with, and therefore require no recapitulation: in order to understand and appreciate William's life and work, however, readers must remember that no one watched more

closely than he the march of those events. He was not actuated by dynastic ambitions: it was not in his nature to play the altruist. Events in Europe, not in England, compelled him to win a throne and deliver a people from the domination of a Catholic and militarist prince. From the time of the outcry against "Popery in High Places" in Charles II.'s reign to the middle of 1688 William scrupulously tried to avoid all appearance of wishing to interfere in English affairs. He sent the customary congratulations to his father-in-law on his accession; and (to the utter amazement of the leaders of the Protestant party) refused to lend any countenance to Monmouth's subversive activities. In 1687 he sent Dykvelt to London to persuade James to join the coalition against France; and it is quite on the cards that had that mission proved successful William would never have accepted the invitation to act against his father-in-law. Always in his mind was one thought: the power of France must be broken; and he came to England merely because he believed that there was a danger that Louis might persuade James to link his fortunes with those of the French. And in that eventuality the security of his beloved Holland would be most seriously threatened.

What were Mary's reactions to this movement against her own father? The answer to this question will be found in the high conception which she took of her wifely duty, and the deep attachment which she had for the Protestant religion. An English nobleman could observe that she was "the most complying wife in the world;" and Macaulay, without exaggeration, maintained that William's "empire over her heart was divided only with her God." She was convinced that it was her husband's sacred duty to champion the Protestant religion; and it grieved her bitterly to think that it was her own father who threatened that religion. Mary was no bigot; she shared her husband's views on toleration for all religious opinions, and would have permitted even Quakers and Catholics to worship as they thought best; but in her mind the teaching and system of the Church of England were always the right way to salvation; and so highly did she value the future of her immortal soul that not even loyalty to her father could bring her to accept a situation in which Protestantism was threatened by its hated rival Catholicism.

Mary was a remarkable woman. Modest at a time when immodesty was looked upon as the height of feminine fashion, she was an agreeable companion and vivacious conversationalist: when she was queen it was said that she talked as much as her husband thought and her sister Anne ate. She was well read, and, according to Burnet, had a particularly exact knowledge of geography; and she wrote French and English "with ease and fluency." Her chief interest was theology. She was not, however, deeply instructed in theological questions, and her interpretation of them was often unorthodox, the outcome of the simple piety with which she was so richly endowed. It is, therefore, not surprising to

find that the clergy both in Holland and England, failed to understand her, and to regard her interest in ecclesiastical affairs as an unwarrantable interference.

Many years of married life passed before William understood his wife. By nature a taciturn man he seldom shared his thoughts with anyone: it was a tradition in his own country that politics were of no concern to a woman. Thus when it became evident that he must interfere in the affairs of England he was inclined to resent the fact that his right to interfere was derived from his relationship to Mary. The idea that he might be reduced to the status of a subject of his own wife was intolerable to him. Fortunately Mary knew her husband better than he knew his wife. She told Burnet, who was then residing at the Hague, that in the event of the people of England inviting her to succeed her father on the throne she would continue to regard herself as subject to William in all things; and when this information was passed on he was so touched by her devotion that he never again left her out of his confidence. He made her acquainted with every move in those fateful weeks prior to his departure for England; and when he bade her farewell he knew that she would approve whatever he did on his arrival in her native land.

The story of William's landing at Torbay, his march to London and the flight of James II. has already been told; and it now remains to add the sequel in which a Dutch prince and his Stuart wife were constituted King and Queen of England.

As William remained in London awaiting the assembly of the Convention his behaviour was scrupulously correct. He showed no desire to dictate to the people of England: on the other hand, he was equally resolved that they should not dictate to him. Thus he told Halifax plainly that he had no intention of playing the difficult rôle of a regent: in the event of James II. being allowed to return to England he would withdraw to Holland, and another must be found to take charge of the direction of affairs. It was very necessary that he should make his position clear, for there existed the most hopeless confusion about the future of monarchy in England; and when the Convention assembled there seemed little prospect of the evolution of a settlement satisfactory to all parties. The extreme Tories clung tenaciously to the doctrine of Divine Right; and were ready to allow James II. to return to his realm provided that he gave assurances to cease his arbitrary methods of government and not to tamper with the system of the Church of England. Another Tory group advocated that the fugitive king ought to be allowed to remain as the nominal ruler, allowing the affairs of the realm to be directed by a regent—William; and a third group went so far as to declare that James II. by his flight had abdicated, and that since there was no proof that his son was the legitimate heir the crown ought to pass to Mary. The main body of the Whigs, on the other hand, would have none of these quibbles: they claimed that the throne was vacant, and that parliament had

the right to fill the vacancy by election. The issue was therefore clear cut: a regency or exclusion. What is often ignored is that not all the Tories favoured the former solution: theoretically they preferred it, but many of them recognised that under a regency there would inevitably be a clash between the nominal king and the regent or regents, and they feared that in that eventuality the former might even seek to re-establish himself with the aid of foreign armies.

The Commons went quickly to work and passed two important resolutions: first, "That King James, having endeavoured to subvert the constitution of this kingdom by breaking the original contract between king and people, and by the advice of Jesuits and other wicked persons having violated the fundamental laws, and having withdrawn himself out of the kingdom, had abdicated the government, and that the throne is thereby vacant;" and, second, "That it hath been found by experience to be inconsistent with the safety and welfare of this Protestant kingdom to be governed by a popish prince." These resolutions caused protracted debates in the House of Lords. The majority stoutly held that the throne was not vacant; but the Commons would not accept this amendment; and to get out of the deadlock thus created a conference between all parties was arranged. It was Halifax who finally put forward a formula acceptable to the majority: necessity compelled them to change the succession; and it was through his efforts that the Lords eventually accepted without modification the first of the two resolutions passed by the Commons.

While the various parties freely aired their views, both William and Mary sought to expedite a settlement. The latter informed Danby, the leader of the party which held that she was her father's heir, that she deprecated the attempt to place her claims in competition with those of her husband; and she repeated to him what she had already confessed to Burnet that nothing would be more acceptable to her than to be subject to William. This point was driven well home when early in February William let the squabbling politicians know that he would return to Holland unless the settlement accorded with his wishes. "No man can esteem a woman more than I do the princess," he said. "But I am so made that I cannot think of holding anything by apron-strings. Nor can I think it reasonable to have any share in the government unless it be put in my own person, and that for the term of my life. If you think fit to settle it otherwise, I will not oppose you, but will go back to Holland and meddle no more in your affairs." The choice now lay between William or James; and William with the full concurrence of Mary made it impossible for the Convention to reject his claims. Accordingly William and Mary were proclaimed king and queen on 13th February 1689 from the steps of the palace at Whitehall.

The settlement was defined in a *Declaration of Right*. After a recital of the illegalities practised by James II., the terms of the "contract" between

king and people were neatly stated. The king could neither dispense nor suspend laws, raise taxes, establish ecclesiastical courts, recruit or maintain a standing army without the consent of parliament: the people had the right to lay petitions before the king, enjoy complete freedom at elections, have regular parliaments, be protected from illegal punishments. While the crown now passed to William and Mary jointly, the executive power of the monarchy was vested in William alone; if he died before Mary she was to retain the crown, and *vice versa*; on the survivor's death, and in the event of Mary dying without issue, it passed to her sister Anne and the heirs of her body; and if Anne should die without issue then the succession would be settled on William's heirs by a wife other than Mary. This *Declaration of Right* was given statutory form by the parliament which assembled in October to confirm the acts of the Convention; but in the *Bill of Rights* it was thought fit to introduce additional safeguards. "Communion with the See or Church of Rome" debarred from the succession; so did marriage to a papist; and it was laid down that every king or queen must "on the first day of the meeting of the first parliament next after his or her coming to the throne, sitting on his or her throne in the House of Peers in the presence of the Lords and Commons therein assembled," take a solemn oath abjuring popery.

The shouting and tumult which accompanied the "Revolution Settlement" soon died down when the people of England came to know the man whom they had chosen as their ruler. William's taciturnity and sullen manner contrasted unfavourably with the gracious geniality of the Stuarts. A martyr to asthma and dyspepsia he was often testy and impatient in his dealings with political advisers whose factious ambitions struck him as childish and absurd; and his preference for Dutchmen was most bitterly resented by the aristocracy of a nation which regarded Holland as the home of "Dutch sows" and "mullipuffs." His tolerant regard for religious matters alienated him from the clergy of the Church of England, who could never quite forget that he was the cause of their renunciation of the doctrine of passive obedience; and his keen interest in military affairs laid him open to the suspicion of secretly aiming to re-establish a military despotism similar to that which was overthrown on his coming to England. And the popular resentment against William was intensified by the impotence which took possession of the nation when it was certain that nothing on earth would persuade James II. to abjure his faith and desert his French friends.

Englishmen could not justly blame William for his preference for Dutchmen. Many of them would have welcomed back James II. had he given assurances not to tamper with religion and the laws; and in the hope that ultimately such assurances would be forthcoming they coquetted with treason in the most faithless manner. Even in the high places of the government lurked traitors: both Russell and Marlborough, upon whom depended the loyalty of the navy

and army, entered into a secret correspondence with the exiled court; and when the latter's treachery was discovered, William could bitterly observe that "were I and my Lord Marlborough private persons the sword would have to settle between us." A more dangerous plot was that to kill William at Turnham Green (1696), for its discovery laid bare the extent of the faithlessness of some of the leading Whigs who were supposed to be the staunchest of William's supporters; and the attainder of Fenwick [1] for complicity in the conspiracy was a clumsy dodge to save the face of the Whig party.

Until 1694 he had the consolation of a wife whose genial ways endeared her to the people of England, but in December of that year after a three days' illness she died of the dread smallpox, and William was left a stranger in a strange land. His grief at Mary's passing was intense: to Burnet he confessed that during the whole of their married life he had never known a single fault in her, and for days he would neither eat nor sleep. On her death-bed she asked him to end his association with Betty Villiers, one of her ladies, who for many years had been his mistress; and not only did he readily consent to do so, but he kept his promise. One other friend remained to him, William Bentinck, whom he created Earl of Portland; but his strange attachment to the worthless Arnold Joost van Keppel, later Earl of Albemarle, shattered that friendship; and for the last few years of his life William was perhaps the loneliest man in his kingdom.

If his subjects never appreciated the man who had saved them from the domination of a Catholic despotism, he also failed to understand the mentality of his English subjects. Absorbed with his brilliant schemes to break the power of Louis and to render it impossible for France to menace the peace of Europe, William regarded England as a piece in the great game of diplomacy; and it seemed incredible to him that Englishmen should be so indifferent to his fortunes when they still liked to call France "the ancient enemy." William's interest in the great war begun in his reign was continental: he forgot that the English interest was chiefly domestic. As long as Louis harboured at his court the king whom they had dispossessed of his crown and lent support to the movements for his restoration Englishmen would fight to the bitter end; but they had a strong aversion from waging a war for the better security of the Dutch republic; and an inherent insularity made it impossible for them to be greatly concerned about the fate of German and Spanish allies.

Louis' fatal mistake was his continued support of the exiled James. Had he abandoned him to his fate he would have certainly weakened much of the English opposition to his continental aims. But Louis was mortally afraid of William's capacity to keep in the field a coalition against him; and with the object of tying his hands, so far as personal intervention on the continent was

[1] Sir John Fenwick was the last man to be condemned to death by an Act of Attainder.

concerned, he supported the man who challenged William's right to the English throne. England entered the War of the Grand Alliance in May 1689 when William's popularity in his newly won kingdom was at its height; and Ireland at once became the battle-ground on which the great issue of French domination in Europe was to be decided. There a catholic majority under the able leadership of Tyrconnell declared for James; and the exiled monarch himself with French regiments landed in the island to maintain his sovereignty.

Troops were quickly sent from England to reinforce the hard-pressed garrisons; but they made little headway against the rebels; and by June 1690 it was imperative that William himself should go to Ireland. For him the outlook was black; at home his government was unpopular owing to the refusal of a number of the clergy to take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy; a plot to restore James had been brought to light; and at sea the French men-o'-war had bested English squadrons sent to prevent the movement of French troops to Ireland. But William saw that the first round of the struggle must be decided in Ireland; and to postpone it would only increase his difficulties. With 30,000 men at his back he landed in Ireland, and on 1st July at the Battle of the Boyne he routed his father-in-law's army and came within an ace of taking him prisoner. Ginkel and Churchill completed the pacification of the country; and the Irish problem was settled as well as it could be under the circumstances by the Treaty of Limerick (October 1691), whereby the Catholics were left in enjoyment of the privileges granted them under Charles II. Incidentally this settlement was shamefully violated four years later when an Irish parliament annulled the treaty, and by means of repressive measures reduced the Catholic majority to what Swift later described as the status of "hewers of wood and drawers of water to their conquerors."

It was to be expected that the exclusion of James II. would result in serious disturbances in Scotland, the land from which the Stuarts had come to rule over England. In the Highlands where many professed Catholicism men stood to arms, eager to make the championship of the exiled king's cause the excuse for trying conclusions with their Lowland neighbours, who stood for the Kirk and the Dutchman king; and the triumph of the Protestant party in England had brought back to Scotland an Argyll, whose father had been executed early in James II.'s reign, and the lands of whose family were parcelled out among old enemies. The Jacobites in the northern kingdom were fortunate in their leader—John Graham of Claverhouse, "Bonnie Dundee:" the government forces, suitably reinforced by Campbells and Camerons, were under the command of Hugh Mackay, an officer of experience and capacity. In the narrow Pass of Killiecrankie (27th July 1690) the two forces met. The wild rush of the Highlanders scattered Mackay's men; but "Bonnie Dundee" fell in the fighting, killed (so it was said) by a silver bullet; and in the confusion which followed

the news of his death the government general was able to rally his men for an orderly retreat. There was no one in Scotland capable of filling "Bonnie Dundee's" place. The Highlanders withdrew to the glens, contenting themselves with raids on government posts established to prevent the concentration of a hostile army; and the sporadic fighting which took place was never a serious menace to William's position in Scotland.

William's name, however, will ever be associated with the massacre of the Macdonalds in Glencoe in February 1692. In the previous summer government agents had reported that there was considerable unrest in the Highlands, and an order was consequently issued requiring the suspected chieftains to take the oath of allegiance before New Year's Day 1692. By accident rather than by design Macdonald of Glencoe presented himself after the appointed day; and Sir John Dalrymple, Master of Stair, who was William's adviser on Scottish affairs, persuaded the king to sign an order for the extirpation of the Macdonalds. A company from Fort William, consisting largely of Argyll's men, marched into Glencoe; for more than a week they lived hospitably with the Macdonalds; and then one night they set out to do their bloody work. Macdonald himself was butchered, together with thirty-seven of his clan, including two women and two children; and in the Highlands a howl of rage went up against William and his satellites. How far the King was implicated it is impossible now to say: there is, however, no doubt that he signed the fatal order; but Burnet said that he was "apt to suffer things to run on until there was a great heap of papers laid before him, so then he signed them a little too precipitately;" and probably that was what happened when Stair brought the order to him for the extirpation of the Macdonalds. Stair was ultimately found guilty by the Scottish parliament of complicity in a plot to butcher the clansmen: William's refusal to punish him lent colour to the story, widely told in Scotland, that he knew more about the business than he cared to divulge; and even if his behaviour is viewed in the most charitable light the Massacre of Glencoe has convicted him, as one of his most sympathetic biographers has observed, as "an accessory after the fact."

The strength of the coalition which William formed against France was more apparent than real. In England there was throughout the war a strong peace party which opposed his warlike efforts either on grounds of cost or to embarrass his government. His position in his native land was weakened by the activities of a vocal republican party still gravely alarmed at the Orange domination, which in their view threatened to undermine cherished liberties and ruin Dutch commercial enterprise. The conglomeration of states which formed the Holy Roman Empire lacked the cohesion essential in the waging of a successful war; Spain was but a shadow of the great state which a century before was a menace to Europe's peace; and Austria was too far removed from the scene of the

fighting to render effective assistance to her allies. On the other hand, the French army was highly organised and efficient; and of all the belligerents France alone was capable of waging war on a grand scale. It is significant, and a tribute to Louis' system of despotism, that for the greater part of the war four well-trained French armies were maintained in the field; and the French navy could always be relied upon to give a good account of itself even when opposed by the combined naval forces of England and Holland.

It is not necessary to follow the course of this War of the Grand Alliance except in the broadest outline. Russell's victory over the French fleet off Cape la Hogue (May 1692) frustrated Louis' second attempt to restore James, and for the time being secured the command of the sea; but privateers nevertheless continued to ravage the Channel ports and prey upon Dutch and English commerce, and 1695 was well advanced before the commanders of the Anglo-Dutch fleets could truthfully say that they had swept the French from the seas. On land, however, the French were much too good for the allies. Mons was taken in 1691 and Namur in the following year; and at Steinkirk (1692) and Neerwinden (1693) William was badly beaten by the French general Luxemburg. But if William was not a great general, he could usually be relied upon to extricate his armies from seemingly impossible positions; and in 1695 he threw himself against the incompetent Villeroi and regained Namur. But this brilliant success did not redeem the failures in the other theatres of war. The Germans under the command of Eugene of Savoy were held in the east; Noailles had Catalonia at his mercy; and as a result of his victory at Marsaglia (1693) Catinat had taken a French army to occupy Piedmont.

William would have remained in the field until he was convinced that the French were crushed; but what he bitterly called "the inconceivable blindness" of his English subjects denied him that pleasure, and Louis himself was not reluctant to abandon the struggle. The war had cost England a vast sum of money, and Englishmen were of the opinion that the return did not justify the expenditure. The Whig Montagu had attempted to re-order the finances of the country, and in 1692 carried through a more exact valuation of landed property. But Montagu's Land Tax was wholly inadequate for the financing of the war, and to avoid the introduction of further taxes, which would provoke discontent, he hit upon the idea of raising a loan "on the security of the nation." In 1694, therefore, he decided to raise £1,200,000 by establishing a bank: the money was to be borrowed from a company to be styled "The Governor and Company of the Bank of England," which would receive 8 per cent. from the government and could borrow from private lenders at 4½ per cent. There was a good deal of opposition to Montagu's plan: it was argued that the new "bank" would become a menace to the liberty of the subject since the monarch could obtain from it what money he needed; but this danger was met by the insertion

William Wissing.

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WILLIAM III. AND MARY II.

of a clause in the Act which established the Bank of England preventing it from lending money to the king without the consent of parliament. The Tories, on the other hand, maintained that the existence of the " bank " would make it increasingly difficult to borrow money on mortgage, with the result that land values would fall; and went on to argue that the power of even a limited monarchy such as existed in England would be considerably weakened. Parliament, however, endorsed Montagu's plan, and the Bank of England took its place in the economic and political life of the nation.

The War of the Grand Alliance was ended by the Peace of Ryswick concluded in 1697. Louis agreed to surrender the conquests made since Nymegen with the exception of Strasburg, and formally recognised William as lawful king of England and Anne as his successor, at the same time undertaking not to lend further support to the exiled James. The Dutch republic obtained the right to garrison some of the Barrier Fortresses in the Spanish Netherlands. From William's point of view it was a satisfactory peace. He could claim that he had checked French aggression and wrung from Louis a public recognition of the Protestant Succession in England; and the right to place Dutch garrisons in the Barrier Fortresses gave his native land a measure of security which it had not enjoyed for half a century.

But there was little rest for William. Long before peace was made at Ryswick it became apparent that the question of the Spanish succession would result in serious European complications. To whom would the vast possessions of the Spanish crown pass at the death of the feeble-minded, childless Charles II. of Spain? Louis of France had a personal interest in this question: he was the husband of Maria Theresa, the eldest of Charles's sisters. There were two other claimants in the field: Prince Joseph of Bavaria, the grandson of Margaret Theresa, the youngest of Charles's sisters; and the Archduke Charles of Austria, whose grandmother, Maria, was Charles's aunt. As it happened, both the Spanish king's sisters had renounced their rights to the crown at marriage; but Louis maintained that since the renunciation of his wife had not been endorsed by the Cortes it was not binding upon her; and to make his claim doubly sure argued that the Spanish government's failure to pay the whole of his wife's dowry, the price of her renunciation, cancelled the arrangement. Knowing that Europe would not consent to the union of France and Spain under the rule of the same monarch, he transferred his claim to Philip Duke of Anjou, the second of the Dauphin's sons.

William was resolved that a French prince should never acquire control of the resources of the Spanish crown; Louis had no wish to see Spain ruled by a prince of Austria, the traditional enemy of his country; and the predominance of Austrian influence in Germany made a Bavarian prince an equally undesirable candidate from the French point of view. The partitioning of the Spanish

possessions was the only way out of the difficulty; and in 1698 William and Louis concluded the First Partition Treaty, whereby it was agreed that Joseph of Bavaria should receive Spain, the Spanish Netherlands, and Spanish America; the Archduke Charles, Milan and Luxemburg; and Philip of Anjou the other Spanish possessions in Italy. Within a month of this arrangement being made Charles of Spain in one of his brief spells of sanity willed the possessions of the Spanish crown to Joseph of Bavaria; but the young prince died early in 1699, and it therefore became necessary for William and Louis to revise their arrangements. By the Second Partition Treaty of 1700 the Archduke Charles was to be allowed to receive Spain, the Spanish Netherlands, Spanish America, and Sardinia; and Philip of Anjou, Naples, Sicily, and Milan.

This flagrant disregard of national feeling in Spain was bound to be resented by the Spaniards; and the Spanish nationalists, sedulously courted by the French agent Harcourt and supported by the queen, finally induced the dying king to make a new will, under which the Spanish possessions were bequeathed to Philip of Anjou and his heirs on condition that they renounced their claims to the French throne. Charles died in November 1700, and Philip of Anjou was at once proclaimed king as Philip V. "*Il n'y a plus des Pyrénées*" gleefully exclaimed Louis when they brought him the news of his grandson's accession: all William's diplomatic scheming was now so much wasted effort.

William's disappointment was the keener because a Tory majority in the House of Commons was determined to oppose him at every turn. In 1698 his Dutch Guards were dismissed and the standing army reduced to 7000 men; two years later the Irish lands bestowed by the king upon his favourites were "resumed" by parliamentary vote; and at the very moment when the *family compact* was a *fait accompli* the Tories were talking of impeaching the Whig ministers who had aided William in concluding the Partition Treaties. Such was the temper of this Tory majority that a petition from the Grand Jury of Kent for warlike preparations against France was met with the punishment of the petitioners, and Louis' violation of the Treaty of Ryswick by sending troops to seize the Barrier Fortresses left them unmoved. Once again Louis was guilty of an error of judgment. On the death of "James II." in September 1701 he promptly recognised his son as "James III.;" and this interference in the domestic affairs of England produced a reaction in William's favour. A new parliament which assembled at the end of 1701 declared strongly in favour of war; and supplies for an army of 40,000 men, the strengthening of the navy, and the payment of foreign mercenaries were generously voted.

William, however, was not destined to see the humiliation of his old adversary Louis. He was much too ill to think of taking the field in person; and it is a high tribute to the soundness of his judgment that he entrusted the command of English troops abroad to Marlborough. On 21st February 1702, as William

rode from the palace at Kennington to hunt at Hampton Court, his horse Sorrel stumbled over a molehill and threw the rider heavily to the ground, breaking one of his collar bones. The fracture was set on the spot, but a journey by coach to London reopened it, and after the second setting serious complications set in. About eight in the morning of 9th March, holding Bentinck's hand over his heart, William died; and in London's taverns and many a stately country mansion in the pleasant countryside glasses were raised to the toast of "the little gentleman in black velvet," who had turned up the molehill over which Sorrell had stumbled a little more than a fortnight before.

QUEEN ANNE IS usually presented to the readers of popular histories as a person of little importance. It was her fate to be dominated first by the Duchess of Marlborough and then by a Tory clique; and her personal share in the routine of government has been obscured by Marlborough's brilliant campaigns abroad and party rivalries at home. Nevertheless, it can truthfully be said of her that England has known few rulers more typically English in their outlook upon life; and if the London mob sometimes greeted her appearances in the streets of the capital with ribald shouts of "Old Brandy Shop," owing to her supposed liking for that liquor, her intense love of England and sincere interest in her subjects' welfare was never for a moment doubted.

Anne was not a woman of strong character. Much of her vitality was sapped by ill-health; and the sorrows which she experienced as a mother, when one after another death robbed her of her children, intensified the loneliness inherent in the throne. She was obstinate to a fault. "In weightier matters," wrote the Duchess of Marlborough, "she never spoke but in a hurry, and had a certain knack of sticking to what had been dictated to her to a degree often very disagreeable and without the least sign of understanding or judgment." But, despite that fault, Anne had a fund of sound common sense and a fine courage; and the one supplied her with the power to trust reliable ministers, the other the will to discount the optimism of their detractors. That she was for some years the pliant tool in the hands of Sarah Duchess of Marlborough cannot be denied; but let it not be forgotten that that friendship for "Mrs Freeman," as she addressed the duchess in their long and intimate correspondence, gave Marlborough his chance not only to establish his own reputation as the greatest soldier which this country has produced, but to complete the work of breaking the power of Louis of France so resolutely begun by William III., and by so doing to place England in the forefront of the military powers of the Continent. It was fortunate, too, that at the crucial moment the bonds of friendship between Anne and the Marlboroughs should be broken; for, as has aptly been said, the Whigs to whom they had bound their fortunes were quite incapable of making peace; and the Tory settlement concluded at Utrecht was not only a

" glorious peace," but it secured for England a much needed respite from the burden of a costly war.

Smollett described Anne as " of middle size, well proportioned. Her hair was of a dark brown, her complexion ruddy; her features were regular, her countenance was rather round than oval, and her aspect more comely than majestic." Kneller's portrait does justice to a physical characteristic of the Stuarts—finely shaped hands. In her last years, when she was a martyr to the gout, she was " exceeding gross and corpulent; " but she never lost her frank, girlish countenance. Burnet spoke in high praise of the " softness of voice and sweetness in the pronunciation; " and it was said that so attracted was her uncle Charles II. by her speech that he employed the actress Mrs Barry to teach her elocution. Anne was deeply attached to the Church of England, and favoured the High Church party: she was most regular in her attendances at divine worship, and revived the practice of touching for " the King's Evil " which William III. had discontinued in the belief that it was a stupid superstition. She was not greatly interested in the arts: she never attended the theatre; and in 1708 it could be said that she had never heard a performance of her court musicians. Although quiet and retiring Anne nevertheless was fond of outdoor amusements of the more strenuous sort: she patronised the Turf; rode hard to hounds; and even after her accession she was in the habit of following stag-hunts in a one-horse " open calash " or chaise which she drove herself " furiously like Jehu."

Her girlhood cannot have been particularly happy. Born in St James's Palace on 6th February 1665, she was the second daughter of James II.—James, Duke of York as he then was—by his wife Anne Hyde; and neither father nor mother took much interest in her upbringing. It was to her uncle Charles II. that she owed her instruction and upbringing in the teaching of the Church of England. He insisted that this should be done, and her father acquiesced in the arrangement; but the papists who were attached to the ducal household were never weary of trying to convert Anne and her sister Mary; and after the early marriage of the latter to William of Orange the younger princess was left alone to cope with these unwelcome advances.

When Anne was sixteen Prince Rupert persuaded Charles II. that Prince George of Hanover—whom fate destined to be her successor on the throne—would make her a suitable husband; but the match was called off by the prince's father; and Charles II., who always seemed to have taken a kindly interest in his niece and disliked German princes, was delighted. Two years later he found her a husband in the person of Prince George of Denmark, about whom he had received glowing reports from his French friends. The marriage was none too popular in the country: Englishmen were disposed to regard the prince's brother Christian V. of Denmark as another French satellite; and they were afraid

that the Danish family might, like the Stuarts, embrace Catholicism. Prince George was, so we are told, " a handsome, fine gentleman : " he had spent some time in the Danish navy, where he enjoyed a reputation as a hard drinker ; and his drunken bouts even shocked an England that was notorious for the drunken habits of her people. Charles II. quickly found that he had little in common with the young husband : he is said to have confessed that he " had tried George drunk and he had tried him sober, but there was nothing in him ; " and the result was that the young couple were not welcomed at court.

Nevertheless Anne was deeply in love with her sailor husband, and he was greatly attached to her. Unhappily their married life was marred by the death of their children. Anne has often been presented to the readers of history as the mother of seventeen children ; but actually only six births can be accounted for, though there were numerous miscarriages ; and equally wide of the mark is the other popular tale that all her children died of smallpox, for as it happens not one died from that fever. Of Anne's six children only one lived to be more than six : he was William Duke of Gloucester, who died " of a fever with a rash " (probably measles) in 1700, at the age of eleven.

Shortly after Anne's marriage " Colonel Churchill's lady " joined her household. Anne had known her as the coy, quick-tempered Sarah Jennings who gave such life to the court of Mary of Modena, James II.'s second wife ; and a girlish attachment was quickly formed between them. That attachment was quickened into a deep affection on Anne's part at least : soon to Sarah she was plain " Mrs Morley ; " to Anne the brilliant young lady-in-waiting, " Mrs Freeman ; " and above these pseudonyms they corresponded in the most intimate manner. It was the Churchills who piloted Anne safely through the anxieties attendant upon the " Glorious Revolution," when she found herself torn between her duty towards her father and her duty towards her faith ; and it was her obstinate attachment for the Churchills which caused the estrangement between her and her sister Mary after 1689.

Much has been written about the friendship of Anne and Sarah Churchill. Some maintain that as queen she was never completely in the power of her favourite ; others insist that the Churchill domination was even greater than the facts themselves suggest. Whatever may be the truth, Sarah Churchill's stronger personality enabled her to influence her royal mistress ; and Anne's deep love for her friend made it inevitable that she should accept her advice. Sarah herself boasts that she was the most powerful of the queen's confidantes : " I began to be looked upon," she wrote, " as a person of consequence without whose approbation, at least, neither places, nor pensions, nor honours were bestowed by the crown."

Once Anne was queen the secret of this friendship was its unity of purpose. At the conclusion of the speech which Anne made to Lords and Commons at the time of her accession, was a plain declaration of the queen's political

faith. "As I know my heart to be entirely English," she said, "I can very sincerely assure you that there is not one thing you can expect or desire of me which I shall not be ready to do for the happiness and prosperity of England." When that speech was made—and one listener said that he "never saw an audience more affected"—the happiness and prosperity of England depended upon a relentless prosecution of the war against Louis of France: when the influence of Sarah Churchill was broken, the happiness and prosperity of England depended upon a peace settlement which her husband's friends were loathe to conclude.

Anne, like George III., had a profound contempt for parties. She wished the affairs of her country to be directed by the best men irrespective of party labels; and on this principle she formed her first ministry. In it Tories like Marlborough and Godolphin rubbed shoulders with Whigs like Devonshire; and accepted as their common policy the maintenance of the Protestant Succession and the necessity of breaking the power of the French king. But this arrangement suffered the fate which is usually reserved for those ideals which fail to take into account realities. In the first parliament of the reign the Tories were in the majority in the House of Commons, whereas the Whigs controlled the House of Lords; and soon were manifested the fundamental differences between the two great political parties.

The Tory party was identical with the landed interest; and it contained the country squires and country parsons whose influence was unchallenged in the villages of England. Tories accepted as a political necessity the "Glorious Revolution," but deprecated the "frills" tacked on to it in the form of concessions to the nonconformists and the merchants of the city of London; and were resolved to cut them clean away when they obtained control of the political power. The Whig party, on the other hand, represented the monied interest; and within it were found the successful men of business, the Latitudinarian bishops, the officers of the army, the yeomen farmers "of about an hundred pounds a year," and the whole body of Protestant nonconformists. They stood by the "Glorious Revolution" in its entirety, though many of them still regarded it as necessary further to limit the powers of the sovereign, and were loud in their insistence that there ought to be "no distinction at all among Protestants."

The rivalry of the two parties represents the clash of the old and new in society. The Tories viewed with jealous concern the rise of a new class of wealthy men, whose power lay in the counting-house and warehouse rather than in landed property; and since the arrival of Dutch William they had the mortification of knowing that the funds required for the waging of the Whig wars came from taxes levied upon land, whereas the contribution of their social rivals to the common cause took the form of loans on which a high rate of interest was payable. It was thought, too, that the Whigs were determined to undermine the system of the Church of England in order to secure toleration for their

nonconformist friends. Latitudinarian bishops professing low doctrinal standards had been appointed to rule dioceses in which the majority of the clergy were High Churchmen; and at the shout of "the Church in danger" all the Tories rallied to support those measures which in Tory eyes were considered necessary for the preservation of the Church of England.

The Tory attitude towards the war is simply understood when it is remembered that it was a Whig war. At first many of the Tories were as ardent as their Whig opponents in advocating a strong line of action against France, but it soon dawned upon them that the war was being conducted in the Whig interest; and consequently there was an inevitable Tory reaction against it and in favour of peace. Not even Whiggery's most ardent champions can now deny that the Tories had grounds for complaint against the Whig management of the war. For the country squires upon whose backs fell the burden of the land tax it was particularly galling to learn how the war brought prosperity to the members of the opposite party—the merchant princes who subscribed to every government loan and the contractors who supplied the navy and the army with the worst possible stores at the highest possible prices; and after 1708 it was patent to all that the war was being prolonged to exclude the Tories from power.

For the moment Marlborough's connection with the Tory party committed the majority in the House of Commons to the war policy which he and Godolphin and their Whig colleagues had framed; but it was a sly dig in Whig ribs rather than an expression of unbounded confidence in Marlborough which actuated the vote in the Commons that the duke had "signally retrieved the ancient honour and glory of the English nation;" and this vote which reflected so unfairly on William III. was followed by a quite unnecessary inquiry into the alleged peculation of the late king's Whig ministers. A more serious divergence from the ideal of non-party government were the differences which developed over the bill to prevent "occasional conformity:" it sought sharply to punish those nonconformists who, having taken the sacrament in order to qualify for public office, continued to attend the services in their own meeting-houses. The bill passed the Commons with a handsome majority, and both Anne and Marlborough favoured it, but it was thrown out by the Whig majority in the Lords (1702).

Thus it became necessary to purge the ministry of its more extreme elements. Rochester, the leader of the extreme Tories, went in 1703, and Nottingham, his chief lieutenant, in the following year; and their places were filled by the moderate Tories, Harley and St John. But the question of "occasional conformity" continued to embarrass the relations of the members of the two parties. In 1703 the Tory majority in the Commons returned to the charge and again passed the bill: again it was rejected by the Lords. Marlborough and Godolphin perceived that their war policy was seriously endangered by

these overt attacks on the Whigs; and when the Occasional Conformity Bill appeared in the Lords for a third time in 1704, they openly voted against it, though on the previous two occasions they had gone into the lobby with its supporters.

There was another reason for this change of political front, and this necessitates our retracing our steps somewhat in order to understand what had been happening abroad during these two years when Tories and Whigs wrangled over "occasional conformity" in parliament. At the beginning of the war France had the advantage: she had four armies in the field, and all were operating in enemy territory. At sea, however, the advantage lay with the allies: the English fleet was now vastly superior to the French; and not only equal to the task of defending England's shores against the risks of invasion, but also of carrying the war into the Mediterranean. Marlborough quickly established his reputation as a soldier and diplomat. In 1702 he took Venloo and Liège and thereby secured the line of the Meuse; and in the following year his capture of Bonn compelled the French to evacuate the lower Rhine. These movements saved Holland and opened communications with north Germany.

Austria was the weak member of the alliance against the French. Not only was she removed from the main theatre of war in the Low Countries, but athwart her line of communication with her allies lay the Francophile Bavaria, and, in addition, disaffection in Hungary made the Austrian government reluctant to send forces out of their country. Louis believed that the capture of Vienna would shatter the alliance, and the French general Tallard was detailed off to carry out this daring plan. Marlborough knew that neither his fellow-countrymen nor the Dutch would allow him to take English and Dutch regiments to the aid of the threatened Vienna, but he was nevertheless determined to do so; and after blinding the Dutch as to his intentions, and being assured that at home his wife and Godolphin would "manage" the queen, he marched boldly into Bavaria. In July 1704 he took Donauwerth and was master of Bavaria; and on the 13th of the following month he overwhelmed the French at Blenheim.

The Tories at home were furious at Marlborough's removal of English troops out of the Low Countries to save Vienna, but in the face of his spectacular victory which was given such popular emphasis when the flags of the captured French and Bavarian regiments were paraded through London's streets, the most that could be done to show Tory disapproval was to minimise Marlborough's services in a thoroughly petty way and to embarrass his Whig friends. Thus, during the elections of 1705, the whole weight of the Marlborough influence was thrown into the scales on the side of the Whigs; and the result was that they obtained a small majority over their Tory opponents in the Commons. Convinced, like Marlborough, that the factiousness of the Tories would jeopardise the English position abroad, and reminded by Sarah Churchill that only by

Kneller.

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ANNE.

supporting the Whigs would the honour of her kingdom be upheld, Anne acquiesced in the change of ministers. That did not mean an abandonment of her cherished ideal of a non-party system of government. Anne had yet to learn that the Whigs meant to use their victory to monopolise the government; and when that happened she quietly withdrew her confidence from them. The elections of 1705 were not followed by drastic ministerial changes, except that in the following year, Sunderland, who was a strong Whig, was appointed Secretary of State in the place of Sir Charles Hedges.

One of the most urgent of the problems with which the Whig majority in parliament was confronted was that concerned with the relations of England and Scotland. The Scots justly complained that although they were subjects of the same sovereign as their English neighbours they were denied equal rights of trade at home and abroad. The friction was increased by the failure of the scheme to colonise the isthmus of Darien in 1699, for which the Scots none too logically held the English government responsible. With the object of trying to compose these commercial differences, a commission was appointed in 1702 to inquire into the commercial relationships of the two countries. Many recognised that the only solution was a parliamentary union; and its urgency was made much more apparent when in 1703 a Scottish parliament by an Act of Security refused to accept Anne's successor until the vexatious trade restrictions were removed and the new monarch gave pledges to respect the Presbyterian system of religion. The English Whigs, obsessed with fears of a Stuart restoration in the northern kingdom, knew that the time had come for generous concessions to the Scots. In 1707, therefore, both countries appointed commissioners to hammer out a settlement; and the outcome of their labours was the union which came into operation on 1st May of the following year. England and Scotland were henceforth to be known as the United Kingdom of Great Britain and were to be bound by the same rules of succession; the Scots were to be represented at Westminster by forty-five members in the Commons and sixteen peers in the Lords; they were to retain their own religion and legal systems, the sovereign swearing to maintain the *Covenant*; there was to be complete freedom of trade between the two countries and equality of taxation; and a new flag, in which were to be incorporated the crosses of St Andrew (white) and St George (red), was to become the national standard of the new United Kingdom. "The Union with Scotland," said Anne, "is the happiness of my reign:" her personal influence had done much to smooth over the difficulties which had arisen during the course of the negotiations.

The war continued to bring renown to English arms and to make certain the ultimate triumph of the allies. Ten days before Blenheim was fought and won, a naval landing party took "the Rock" at Gibraltar while the Spanish garrison was at Mass. In 1705 Peterborough with a small English force seized

Barcelona and raised Catalonia for the allies; and on 23rd May in the following year Marlborough trounced Villeroi, Louis' favourite marshal, at Ramilles, thereby securing Flanders for the allies. In September 1706 the brilliant Eugene of Savoy defeated the French under the walls of Turin and cleared Italy of the invading armies; and Galway, moving from a base in Portugal, marched forward to take Madrid and there to proclaim the Austrian archduke as Charles III. of Spain. But in 1707 a note of warning was struck in Spain, and the Whigs would have been wiser had they heeded it: in April, at Almanza, Galway's mixed force of British and Portuguese was defeated; and with the exception of the Catalans the people of Spain rallied to the support of their Bourbon ruler. But Marlborough's victory at Oudenarde in the following summer, followed in the autumn and winter by the sieges and capture of Lille and Ghent, appeared more than to counteract the effect of this enemy gain in the remote Iberian peninsula; and the knowledge that at last the Whigs were in complete control of the government gave the duke and his supporters a feeling of security which they had never hitherto completely enjoyed.

Early in 1708 Marlborough and Godolphin had bullied Anne into dismissing Harley and St John from the ministry; and these two representatives of the moderate Tories were replaced by the thoroughgoing Whigs Henry Boyle and Robert Walpole. The excuse for this move was that they could not trust Harley; but at the bottom of the whole business was the rivalry at court between Sarah Churchill and Abigail Masham. The latter had been introduced to Anne by Harley, and there is little doubt that through her agency he sought to influence the queen against the strong partisan measures taken by the Whigs to consolidate their position in the government. At that time Anne stood badly in need of sympathy: Sarah Churchill's domineering behaviour at court was intolerable; and the poor queen was tormented by her constant threats to withdraw into the country unless her wishes were carried out. Anne never bestowed upon Mrs Masham the same love which long before she had given to Sarah Churchill; but feminine companionship was essential for her happiness, and when the old friend ceased to respect the claims of friendship she naturally turned for consolation to the new one whose moderate Tory views were so much to her own liking.

After 1709 it was impossible for the Whigs to escape the charge of wishing to retain power by prolonging the war. In that year peace negotiations were opened in Holland. The most unexpected concessions were offered by Louis —to recognise the Archduke Charles as king of Spain and ruler of the Spanish possessions in the Low Countries and America on condition that Philip of Anjou received Naples, Sicily, and the Milanese; to surrender all the Barrier Fortresses to the Dutch; and to withdraw support from the Stuart exiles in France. There were disagreements among the allies: the Austrians urged that Louis

must be compelled to send French troops to expel his grandson from Spain; and Marlborough lacked the ability to force unanimity upon the allies. The Dutch, however, were in favour of concluding a peace: the French promise to surrender the Barrier Fortresses gave them what Holland most desired; and the fear that they would desert the allied cause resulted in the Barrier Treaty, which bound them irrevocably to the continuance of the war.

So the peace moves came to nothing, and in June both sides prepared for a renewal of hostilities. In September came Malplaquet, a victory for Marlborough, but one which cost him 20,000 casualties as compared with the 15,000 suffered by his French opponent Villars; and although in the course of the next six months the English general went on to secure control of a number of important fortresses in northern France the exhausted condition of his men prevented him from marching to Paris. The Tories at home referred to Malplaquet as "a Pyrrhic victory," and protested that the country was being "bled" to win fortresses for the Dutch.

A stupid prosecution of a tub-thumping High Church parson finally brought Nemesis upon the Whigs. In August 1709 Dr Henry Sacheverell preached an innocuous sermon at Derby on the occasion of the assizes, and it was published with a dedication to the sheriff and grand jury of the county. In the following November the same preacher appeared in St Paul's to preach to the lord mayor and aldermen of London on "the perils of false brethren in Church and State," and in unrestrained language extolled non-resistance and ridiculed some of the leading Whig politicians. The sermon was printed and widely circulated; and in December, on the motion of a Whig member, was voted in the Commons to be with the one preached at Derby "malicious, scandalous, and seditious libels, highly reflecting upon Her Majesty and her government, the late happy revolution, and the Protestant Succession." Sacheverell and the printer appeared at the bar of the House: the latter was released with a warning, but the preacher was committed to the custody of the officers of the House to await impeachment "for high crimes and misdemeanours."

All at once a man of no great consequence became a popular hero, and his cause the rallying-cry of the Tory opposition to the Whig government. While awaiting trial (he had been admitted to bail) prayers were publicly said for him in hundreds of churches up and down the country; and when he went on 27th February 1710 to face his accusers in Westminster Hall a vast mob of people followed to wish him God-speed and to pour their curses on the Whigs. Anne herself put in an appearance now and then at Westminster Hall, and as she was carried in her sedan chair through the streets she was greeted with throaty shouts of "God bless your Majesty" and "We hope your Majesty is for High Church and Dr Sacheverell." Too late did the Whigs realise their mistake, and their attempt to extricate themselves from an unenviable position

by not inflicting severe penalties won them no support from the mob. Sacheverell was found guilty: he was suspended from preaching for three years, and the two offending sermons were burnt by the public hangman; but he was still permitted to read prayers in church; and whenever he did so people flocked to see and hear him.

From all over the country came addresses begging Anne to dissolve parliament, and the queen, in the belief that it was the popular will, at last decided to change her ministers. She acted cautiously. She refused to see Sarah Churchill, undoubtedly because she wished to avoid the " scene " which would inevitably accompany their meeting. That unpleasant experience could not be avoided. In a towering rage the duchess burst into the royal apartments and upbraided the queen: poor Anne broke down; but she nevertheless refused to be browbeaten by her friend, and the duchess left the royal presence with the command to put into writing anything that she had to say.

The Whigs were completely taken aback by Anne's behaviour; and divided among themselves they were unable to avoid the wrecking of their cherished plans. Little could be said when the queen replaced Kent by Shrewsbury, because the former agreed to resign from the office of Lord Chamberlain on receiving a dukedom; but a howl of rage went up when Sunderland, whom Anne detested for his advanced Whig views, was commanded to hand over his seals of office to Dartmouth; and when in August Godolphin fell and Harley and St John were brought back in the following month, it was realised that the end had come. Anne still clung, rather pathetically as it happened, to the old ideal of a non-party ministry; but the Tory triumph at the elections which followed her dissolution of parliament at the end of September merely represented for her a change of political masters; and her sublimation to the Tory will was completed when, early in 1711, she dismissed from her posts at court her old friend, Sarah Churchill.

The Tory leaders Harley and St John, who were soon to become Earl of Oxford and Viscount Bolingbroke respectively, were determined to strain every nerve to bring the war to an end. Anne's health was not good, and her Hanoverian successor was already so comfortably esconced in the Whig pocket that his accession must result in a return of the Whigs to power; and that would mean a continuance of the war which pressed so heavily upon the landed interest. Early in 1711, therefore, St John was entrusted with the delicate task of opening negotiations with the French. He went to work with the greatest possible secrecy, even lying to friends and foes that anything was afoot; and after eight months the basis of a settlement was reached. It was thereupon agreed that a conference of the belligerents should meet in the following year at Utrecht, and the English government undertook that their allies would be " coerced " into accepting the terms agreed on.

Much has been said about the way in which St John "managed" this peace, and the Tories have been accused of having shamefully treated their allies. But it is well to remember that St John only followed the example of William III. when he hammered out with the French a basis of settlement to be imposed upon his allies; and it can be argued that such a line of action was as necessary in 1710 as it had been in 1698. The petty jealousies of some of the members of the alliance would have impeded a settlement by conference: the meetings would have been taken up with senseless wrangling and disagreement. St John has been condemned in some quarters for having accepted the *status quo ante bellum* in Spain, thereby abandoning the Catalans who had supported the allied cause since Peterborough captured Barcelona. The fate of the Catalans was unfortunate, but it was a grim necessity: the allies had failed to conquer Spain, and while the secret peace talks were in progress the Spaniards themselves had refused to recognise as their ruler the Austrian archduke, and at Brihuega and Villa Viciosa had overthrown allied armies operating in their country. As it happened, too, the Archduke Charles was in 1711 elected to succeed his brother Joseph as emperor; and to have allowed him to control Spain and Spanish America would have jeopardised the Balance of Power in Europe.

Once the peace preliminaries were made public property, the Whigs moved heaven and earth to secure their rejection by the country. Representatives of allied nations protested to the queen; and Marlborough himself spoke vehemently against them on the ground that they did not give security to Europe. There were angry debates in parliament, and it was not long before there appeared signs of disunion within the Tory party itself. It was the Tory Nottingham who moved in the Lords that no peace which left Spain and Spanish America to the Bourbons could be regarded as honourable; and his motion was carried by a majority of eight. The price of Nottingham's support for the Whig demand for a continuance of the war unless the French would assist in expelling Philip of Anjou from Spain was the passing of the Occasional Conformity Bill; and the nation witnessed the curious spectacle of the party which, since the days of Charles II., had consistently stood for toleration, allowing to be placed on the statute book of the realm a measure which deprived nonconformists of the right to occupy public office. Harley and St John were not to be beaten by such discreditable tactics; and on 31st December Anne created at their request twelve Tory peers to secure a ministerial majority in the Lords. On the same day a messenger carried a letter to Marlborough written in the queen's own hand: in it she communicated to the man who had made the peace possible the decision which she had reached in council the previous day, that she "thought fit to dismiss him from all his employments." The preliminaries were quickly given parliamentary endorsement;

and in June 1712 English forces abroad were commanded to take no further part in hostilities against the French. Dutchmen and Austrians cursed the English Tories for their perfidy, and resolved to continue the struggle without England; but their defeat at Denain persuaded the former to change their mind, and Holland joined with England in signing the Treaty of Utrecht on 11th April 1713. The Austrians remained in the field for another year and then signed the Treaty of Rastadt with France: it was merely an endorsement of the terms already accepted by the other allies at Utrecht.

Whatever criticism the Whigs might level against St John's settlement it was in every way favourable to England, and her allies had little ground for complaint. Philip of Anjou was allowed to retain Spain and Spanish America on the understanding that the crowns of France and Spain were never to be united in one person; the Emperor Charles VI. gained the Spanish Netherlands, the Milanese, Sardinia, and Naples; the Dutch received the Barrier Fortresses; Sicily passed into the Duke of Savoy's possession; and Great Britain obtained Gibraltar, the Hudson Bay territory, Minorca, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia in full sovereignty, and the right to send one merchantman a year to Spanish America and to monopolise the supply of negro slaves to the colonists there. From the Whig point of view nothing could be more satisfactory than the French king's undertaking to recognise the Hanoverian Succession and to expel "James III." from France.

The Tories failed to take advantage of the strong position in which they found themselves in the country at the time of the peace. It was common knowledge that Anne's health was breaking: it was imperative that steps should be taken in preparation of her death. A suggestion was made that Prince George of Hanover should be brought to live in England to safeguard the succession interests of his eighty-four-years-old grandmother; but it reduced the queen to such a state of hysterical despondency that the Tory leaders deferred to her wishes, and nothing was therefore done to prepare for the future. The Whigs seized upon this Tory unpreparedness and interpreted it as sympathy for the exiled "king" whose claims, it was popularly said, Anne herself preferred to those of the Hanoverians. The Jacobite leanings of the ministry also seemed proved in Whig eyes by the fact that during the reduction of the army to a peace footing certain regiments—and some like the 6th Foot could claim an honoured seniority—were singled out for disbanding; and the money spent in the Highlands of Scotland was regarded as paving the way for the return of the Catholic James. Thus the Whigs constituted themselves the guardians of the Protestant Succession and made ready to meet the crisis which was believed would follow the queen's death. The Whig leaders were in close touch with the Hanoverians and kept a watchful eye on the Jacobites; and in this way they placed Anne's successor deeply in their debt.

Much of the blame for the Tory irresolution must fall on the shoulders of Harley (Oxford). He was frequently drunk, and always unable to make up his mind; and he was therefore ill-fitted for the leadership of a party which had yet to learn the rudiments of party discipline. His colleague St John (Bolingbroke) was one of those men who have an instinctive contempt for half measures: his morals were atrocious; he was a professed deist; and he was suspected of corruption. The political rivalry of these two men was intensified by personal jealousy on St John's part: he was deeply hurt that Harley should receive an earldom, whereas he was expected to be content with a viscountcy. He determined, therefore, to oust Harley from the ministry; and to undermine his chief's authority with the party he made a discreditable alliance with the High Church Tories, the price of which was the infamous Schism Act which made a rowdy passage through parliament in May and June 1714. This measure provided that none but a communicant member of the Church of England should keep a school. In high glee the extremists in the Tory party boasted that as a result of their wisdom there would not be a single nonconformist in the next generation of Englishmen! There is little doubt that Harley, who had been brought up in a Presbyterian home, was most unhappy about this savage attack on his Whig opponents; but he had not the courage to call St John to book; and aware that Mrs (now Lady) Masham was playing his rival's game at court, he tendered his resignation. Anne refused to accept it, for she had a peculiar affection for Harley; but the forces arrayed against him were too powerful for a dying woman to overcome; and on 27th July she dismissed him.

Anne was already very ill, but she had an instinctive distrust of St John, and she refused his request to be appointed to Harley's vacant office. The treasury was put in commission: St John remained merely a secretary of state, even if nominally he was the head of the ministry. On the day following Harley's dismissal it was reported that Anne was too ill to attend to business: she rallied on the 29th, but on the 30th she suffered what her physicians thought was "an apoplectic fit;" and the politicians came hurrying to her side at Kensington. At her bedside a council assembled: one of the members—St John so it was said—proposed that she should nominate Shrewsbury as Lord Treasurer; and too weak to speak she placed the white staff of the office in his hands. St John had burnt his boats: supported by two other dukes—Somerset and Argyll—Shrewsbury quietly made ready to honour the Protestant succession. Soon after seven on the morning of 1st August Anne breathed her last. "I believe," wrote her physician, Arbuthnot, "sleep was never more welcome to a weary traveller than death was to her." On the same day Shrewsbury caused her successor, the Prince George, Elector of Hanover, to be proclaimed in the accustomed places in London; and there was a sharp rise in government funds.

How far St John and his extreme Tory friends were involved in a plot to

restore the Stuarts on Anne's death is too big a question to be discussed here except in the briefest possible way. It was evident to the Tories that they could hope for few favours when the Hanoverian George was placed upon the throne: St John himself had made that impossible by the tactless letter which he had sent in Anne's name to his future sovereign when a request was made that his son, created Duke of Cambridge in 1711, should receive a writ of summons to the House of Lords. There is no doubt, too, that both Harley and St John had been in communication with "James III.;" but, on the other hand, it is doubtful whether they entertained any serious hope of bringing back a man who, to his honour, refused to abandon his faith, and would only give the most guarded assurances of protection to the Church of England. While there were thoroughgoing Jacobites within the Tory party, men who would have welcomed "James III." back unconditionally, the bulk of the Tories were staunch Church of England men, and as long as the Stuart claimant remained in communion with the Church of Rome they would refuse him (somewhat reluctantly perhaps) their support. St John knew the character of his own party, and in the negotiations which he conducted with "James III." he insisted upon him renouncing Catholicism; and when his terms were refused he must have found himself in a state of pathetic impotence. In a letter written to Swift on 3rd August 1714, he said: "Oxford (Harley) was removed on Tuesday, the queen died on Sunday. What a world this is! And how does fortune banter us!"

CHAPTER II

THE GERMANS

George I. : 1714–1727
George II. : 1727–1760

THE ACT OF Settlement gave Great Britain her German kings: it was rendered necessary by the untimely death of "the most hopefull the Prince William Duke of Gloucester (the only surviving issue of Her Royall Highness the Princess Ann of Denmark)," in July 1700. The tragic event brought "unspeakable grief and sorrow" to the country, and occasioned much speculation as to how the succession would be regulated now that it was certain that William III. would not remarry and unlikely that Anne would have other children. Ardent Jacobites continued to hope that some sort of arrangement might be made with the exiled king to maintain the succession rights of his family; but their inability clearly to define the form of that arrangement, and James's refusal to abjure the Catholic faith, dashed the Jacobite hopes to the ground; and they were driven to face what for them was the ugly fact that the majority of their fellow-countrymen were determined that there should be no risk of a return of Catholicism to the land. In some quarters the claims of a Savoyard prince were freely canvassed. Victor Amadeus of Savoy was the husband of Anna Maria, the daughter of James II.'s sister Henrietta: he had fought on the side of the allies against France, and had "sons to spare." But Victor Amadeus enjoyed an unfortunate reputation of being a rather shifty person in diplomacy; and although it was said that he was not averse from allowing one of his sons to abjure the Catholic faith in order to acquire a kingdom, there was a more general feeling in favour of the counter-proposal which sought to make a thorough-going Protestant princess Anne's successor.

It will be recalled that James I.'s daughter Elizabeth had married the Elector Palatine Frederick. Their daughter Sophia was the widow of Ernest Augustus, Duke of Brunswick-Lüneburg, who had become the first Elector of Hanover; and despite her seventy years was a most remarkable woman, who combined in her person Stuart charm and German practicability. She was a staunch Protestant: her sons were capable soldiers, particularly the eldest, George Lewis, Elector of Hanover, when the Act of Settlement was under discussion. He was effectively inoculated with the serum of Francophobia, and was therefore a *persona grata* with William III. who saw in France the menace

to Europe's peace, and his Whig friends in England who regarded Louis as the champion of Catholicism and the protector of the banished James. What better arrangement for the regulation of the succession could be made than to recognise Sophia and her heirs as next in the line of succession after Anne? The matter was quickly settled by the Act of Settlement or, to give the measure its more accurate title, *An Act for the further Limitation of the Crown and better securing the Rights and Liberties of the Subject.*

That it was thought necessary to tack on to the measure safeguards for " the rights and liberties of the subject " indicated the Englishman's dislike for kingship vested in a foreigner. He was ready to admit that circumstances compelled him to give allegiance to a foreign prince; but that did not mean that he enjoyed having to do so; and although the vagaries of fortune necessitated the passing of the Act of Settlement, there was nevertheless in many quarters a hope that some " miracle " would happen to make the measure a dead letter.

The Act of Settlement laid it down that in the event of William and Anne dying without issue the crown was to pass to the Electress Sophia of Hanover " and the heirs of her body, being Protestants; " and to define in more accurate terms the type of Protestantism to which the Hanoverians would be expected to adhere it was stipulated that on coming " into the possession of this crown " they should " joyn in communion with the Church of England as by law established." Profession of " the popish religion " or reconciliation to " the See or Church of Rome," or marriage to " a papist," was to be regarded as an " incapacity," which barred them to the succession. Then came the safeguards which were the coping-stone of the Revolution Settlement. English forces were not to be employed in defence of lands not belonging to the crown of England, and the sovereign was not to be allowed to leave the kingdom " without the consent of parliament." Foreigners were not to be advanced to state employment in England. Persons holding offices under the crown or in receipt of crown pensions were to be deemed ineligible to sit in the House of Commons. Judges were to hold office *quamdiu se bene gesserint.* Impeachments were not to be nullified by pardons issued under the Great Seal.

A word about these safeguards which represent not only the experience gained by Englishmen in the reign of the Dutch William, but also their fears for the future when a Hanoverian would rule over them. There was much wisdom in the stipulation that English seamen and soldiers were not to be used to defend the continental possession of the foreigner seated on the English throne, and that foreigners were not to be placed in state offices which by right of birth belonged to native Englishmen. Time was to show that the first two Georges were far more interested in the well-being of their " miserable little electorate " than in their British possessions; and with their open dislike of Englishmen they would have never hesitated to plant their German friends in lucrative offices had they

not been prevented from doing so. But the attempt to prevent "placemen" and "pensioners" from sitting in the House of Commons would have brought about the separation of the executive and the legislature; and the members of parliament would have become critics who were denied the advantage of having in their midst those whose actions they criticised. Fortunately this clause of the Act of Settlement was repealed in 1706, and was replaced by a new enactment which required only those members accepting offices established prior to 1705 to seek re-election on appointment. The placing of the judges beyond the "influence" of the king and ministers was a most salutary reform: no longer would it be possible to secure favourable verdicts by threats of dismissal from the judicial bench.

During Anne's reign the old Electress Sophia and the "Hanover family" were placed in a most difficult position. Anne was known to have a sneaking regard for her half-brother whose legitimacy she had at first doubted: moreover, she had a morbid aversion from the whole question of the Hanoverian Succession. In her predecessor's reign it had been suggested that Sophia ought to receive a parliamentary grant, and that both she and her grandson should be invited to England; but the matter had not been proceeded with; and when in 1705 some Tory peers in the Lords moved that the electress be invited to reside in England the Whigs defeated the motion. This Whig opposition was dictated by a desire not to offend Anne: the most the Whigs were then prepared to do was to pass two Acts, the first of which naturalised Sophia, and the second empowered her to appoint twenty-one "lords justices" who with the great officers of the crown were to carry on the government of Great Britain if she or her heirs should happen to be absent from England when Anne died. Sophia was particularly careful not to offend Anne: she admitted quite frankly that it was only natural that "the queen should be more in favour of her brother than of us;" and it was only when she was convinced that a section of the Tory party was attempting to undermine the Hanoverian Succession that she asserted herself by openly expressing astonishment that a writ of summons to the Lords was not issued to her grandson, the future George II., in his capacity as Duke of Cambridge. Anne was deeply offended, and a sharp letter was sent to Hanover. Sophia received the rebukes—and even threats—in it with seeming calmness; but two days after its arrival she fell dead in her garden (8th June 1714); and there is little doubt that the shock of a possible breach between her and Anne was the cause of her death. George Lewis at once rose to the occasion: he addressed a conciliatory letter to Anne, and sent his agent Hans Caspar von Bothmer to England to watch events without putting himself too openly in the pockets of the Whigs with whom the Hanoverians had for some time been in the closest touch. Anne's death followed so soon afterwards that the breach was not further widened: had she lived some months longer there would inevitably have been

a clash, for Bothmer was instructed to press the point that a member of the electoral family should be invited to live in England.

On the day of Anne's death Bothmer sent his secretary Gödeke post-haste to Herrenhausen to inform the Elector George Lewis that he had been proclaimed king. The worthy secretary reached his destination on 6th August; a day or two later there appeared at the electoral palace the Earl of Dorset who was to act as the new sovereign's official escort on the journey to England. An immediate start was urged by the English envoy; but George pleaded that it was first necessary for him to arrange for the government of the electorate during his absence; and the leisurely way in which he went to work about it confirmed the whispered fears that he was "very indifferent to the succession" and that in his heart of hearts he would have preferred to remain in Hanover to amuse himself "with bagatelles." George had no intention of leaving his native land until he was assured that he was to receive a welcome in England. The news from his agents in London was comforting: they confidently stated that there was no fear of a Jacobite rising; and reported that the government had not only tendered the oaths of allegiance and abjuration to the members of parliament, but had voted the king "a handsome" civil list of £700,000 a year. On 31st August, therefore, George bade farewell to Herrenhausen and Hanover and started on his journey to England.

His heart was heavy: a man of fifty-four does not find it easy to change his mode of life; and conditions in England were vastly different from those in Hanover. George was one of those men who instinctively shrink from the glamour of public life: "he was born with all the attributes of a country gentleman," said one of his friends, "but is devoid of those of a monarch." Moreover, there was something rather forbidding about England. The Englishman was allowed to boast of the liberty of the subject, which was something which a German dared not do; and the English system of parliamentary government had all the appearance of being designed to keep the monarch in the leading-strings of the politicians. In Hanover there was none richer than George Lewis: in England there were great landowners and merchant princes whose personal wealth was infinitely greater than that of the sovereign. Nor can he have been blind to the fact that the insularity of the English would call down upon his head that ostracism which an insular people naturally reserves for foreigners. But George always had a high conception of his public duty: he had been summoned to occupy the British throne to the exclusion of a catholic and Francophile Stuart; and a Protestant upbringing and lively fear of France compelled him to accept that summons without a murmur.

His progress through Holland was quite informal. His suite was small and meanly provided for; and at respectable intervals behind him followed his mistress and eldest son, the latter already being on the worst of terms with his

father. What amused the gossips in England was the news that the royal party, which numbered about one hundred persons, possessed the services of only one washerwoman. Wittily a later writer observed that his lack of an adequate laundry staff has no historical significance, " except in so far as it may bear on the strong objection evinced by the first members of the House of Guelph to washing their dirty linen in public ! "

On 16th September George embarked in the yacht *Peregrine*, which lay in the harbour of Oranie Polder ; and two days later, having been bravely escorted across a befogged North Sea by a squadron of British men-o'-war, he was landed at Greenwich. All the leading figures in the political world in his new kingdom were there to meet him ; but at the official reception which was held on the 19th he quickly disabused the minds of those Tories who, despite his dismissal of St John some days before leaving the Continent, thought that they might be continued in office. He ignored Ormonde and Harcourt completely, and took the least possible notice of the fallen Oxford : his coolness to the Tories was in marked contrast to the warmth of his greetings for the Whigs. On the 20th, with his eldest son at his side, George made a state entry into London : nine days later the Tory ministry was replaced by one predominantly Whig.

Even the most enthusiastic supporters of the Hanoverian Succession found it difficult to like the king who was to save the country from Catholicism and to place the Whig lords in the seats of the mighty. George was a dapper little man with handsome features ; but there was a complete absence of expression in his countenance ; and his manners were coarse and ungallant. He soon made it clear that he had nothing but contempt for England and Englishmen : he never tried to learn the language of his new subjects or to understand their national characteristics ; and he surrounded himself with German favourites who were even more contemptuous than he was of their new home. Once he had confessed that he was a deist ; but after coming to England he found that it was politic to put in regular appearances at divine service. His admirers were few, his enemies many. The Whigs consoled themselves that he was at least " an honest blockhead," and Robert Walpole, who was to become his chief minister, found that he could be easily controlled " by bad Latin and good punch : " the Tories, on the other hand, showered upon him unprintable epithets, and the loyal toast was invariably followed by a muttered " God damn him."

In one department, however, George could boast of a high degree of proficiency. He had seen a considerable amount of active service ; and although it would have been impossible to count him among the great generals of his age, he was nevertheless well placed in those of the second class. His leadership was of the solid kind : he fought battles strictly in accordance with the rules laid down in military manuals, and relied upon an element of good luck to win them. At the age of twenty-three he had been with Sobieski in the army

which raised the siege of Vienna (1683), and ten years later distinguished himself at Neerwinden: during the War of the Spanish Succession he was placed in command of the imperial army operating in the districts of the upper Rhine (1707–09); and it was a bitter blow to him that he had no opportunity of giving Europe a display of his generalship. His interest in military affairs had a natural reaction: he could never find it in him to forgive the English Tories for having come to terms with Louis before the object for which the war had been fought—the expulsion of a Bourbon from the throne of Spain—was achieved.

His detractors soon saw to it that he was presented to his English subjects as a callous husband and unnatural father; and the English liking for the cause of the under-dog was a potent factor in the king's unpopularity. In 1682 George had married the charming Sophia Dorothea of Celle-Luneburg, and two children were born to them, the future George II. and the consort of Frederick William I. of Prussia. The young wife found it impossible to tolerate George's coarse manners and flagrant infidelities, and she was soon involved in an *affaire* with the handsome Count Philip von Königsmark. The unfaithful husband's feelings were so outraged that his wife's lover mysteriously disappeared, never to be heard of again: she was divorced and clapped into prison at Ahlden (1694) where she languished until her death thirty-two years later. How far George was involved in Königsmark's disappearance it is impossible to know; but he was the last person to make a virtue of marital fidelity, and his subsequent contemptuous treatment of the unfortunate woman branded him as a heartless brute.

Family squabbles had a fatal fascination for our early Hanoverian kings. It would be tedious to discuss the causes of the quarrel between George I. and his eldest son: sufficient is it to say that it was due to a curious form of paternal jealousy which was aggravated by an equally curious filial inconsiderateness. It is often said that the future George II. resented his father's treatment of his mother. He may have done so, but outwardly he showed no affection for the unfortunate lady; and Lord Hervey, who knew his court intimately, has recorded that Sophia Dorothea's name was never mentioned by her son, "not even inadvertently or indirectly."

Englishmen found it difficult to appreciate the company which their Hanoverian king kept. "The Schulenburg," whose angular figure caused her to be known in England as "the Maypole," dominated the court. We are told by a contemporary that "she was in effect as much queen of England as any was;" and George showered no less than six peerages upon her.[1] She was a dull, unattractive creature: "a mawkin" was the Electress Sophia's

[1] In 1716 she was created Baroness Dundalk, Countess and Marchioness of Duncannon, and Duchess of Munster: two years later Baroness of Glastonbury, Countess of Faversham, and Duchess of Kendal.

description of her; and it passed the old lady's comprehension that she was her "son's passion." Money was her absorbing interest: according to Robert Walpole, she "would have sold the king's honour for a shilling advance to the best bidder;" and she netted a very large fortune from the sale of offices. A more amusing person in the royal entourage was the Baroness von Kilmansegg. "She had," said Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, "a greater vivacity in conversation than ever I knew in a German of either sex." As pronouncedly plump as "the Schulenburg" was thin, English humorists dubbed her "the Elephant," and her presence at court was interpreted by the gossips as proof that she was one of the royal mistresses. As a matter of fact, "the Elephant" was one of the Elector Ernest Augustus' "bastards," and therefore George's half-sister, and he treated her as such. "The Elephant" also managed a successful business in the sale of honours: but for that matter so did every one in the royal household, including the two Turkish *valets de chambre*, Mustapha and Mahomet, whom George had taken prisoner when soldiering in Hungary in the sixteen-eighties.

It was not George's immoral habits, but rather their grossness, which caused such unfavourable comment in polite society. "The king loved pleasure, and was not delicate in his choice of it," observed Chesterfield. "No woman came amiss to him, if they were very willing and very fat. . . . The standard of His Majesty's taste made all those ladies who aspired to his favour, and who were near the statutable size, strain and swell themselves like the frogs in the fable to rival the bulk and dignity of the ox. Some succeeded, and others burst." There was, of course, a good deal of feminine jealousy aroused in consequence of his preference for German women; and it is an interesting commentary on social behaviour in his reign that when he took Anne Brett into his establishment he was said to have "paid the nation the compliment of taking openly an English mistress."

It must not be supposed that the Whigs were greatly put out by these shortcomings in the Hanoverian king. They had not brought George to England to require him to be a paragon of virtue: he was in the country merely to satisfy the normal Englishman's craving for monarchy, and to delude him into the belief that the rule of a highly organised and skilfully managed political party was not inconsistent with cherished monarchical ideals. The Whigs wanted power to break their Tory opponents. George was easily persuaded that the return of the Whigs was in the public interest, and absolutely necessary for the security of the Hanoverian succession. He was soon to discover that much of the opposition to the fact that he and not "James III." sat on the throne was due to the savagery of the Whig attack on the Tories.

George was crowned at Westminster on 20th October. It was a glorious autumn day, and to the ceremony flocked men of every shade of political opinion.

St John was among the congregation: at that moment he was ready to accept as his king the rather stolid German who appeared thoroughly bored by the elaborate ritual in the service; and many of his Tory friends shared his sentiments. Crowds of Londoners thronged the streets. Now and then a cry of "God damn George" was raised in a half-hearted way; but the Londoners for the most part were in happy mood, and the day passed off without untoward incident. Not so in such populous centres as Birmingham, Bristol, and Norwich: there the crowds wore Stuart favours, and indulged in a certain amount of rioting. And the University of Oxford celebrated the day by conferring an honorary degree upon a thoroughgoing Jacobite.

The elections which were held in January 1715 on the dissolution of parliament resulted in an overwhelming victory for the Whigs. They owed their success to "James III.:" in a manifesto issued before the elections the exiled prince again asserted his claim to the throne, and referred to his sister Anne's "good intentions towards us." The Whig party managers quickly seized upon this reference to present to the electors their Tory opponents as "a gang of traitors" out to bring back a professed papist to rule over the land. The effect was, as the election results indicated, magical: even good Tories went to the hustings to vote for Whig candidates, or lent them their support by refraining from voting.

The Whigs were determined to take the fullest advantage of their opponents' discomforture; and in the King's Speech to the parliament which was opened in person by George on 17th March there occurred the ominous warning of an intention "to trace out those measures whereon he ('James III.') placed his hopes, and to bring the authors of them to condign punishment." The Tories did not have to wait long to know what interpretation the Whigs meant to place upon those words, for Stanhope, the Secretary of State for the Southern Department, followed them up with the announcement that it was the government's intention to impeach the Tory leaders; and a "secret committee" was appointed to examine the papers of the late ministry. St John was the first to lose his nerve: on the night of 26/27th March he bolted for the Continent, and thereby allowed the Whigs to use his cowardice as a proof of his guilt. In June Robert Walpole presented the report of the "secret committee;" and parliament ordered the arrest of a number of prominent Tories. Ormonde followed St John's example and fled to the court of "James III.," and again the Whigs made capital out of his behaviour. Harley, however, stood his ground: whatever he had done in his ministerial capacity was done with the knowledge and approval of the sovereign. His condemnation was more an act of Whig vengeance than proof of guilt, for the truth of the matter was that the report contained little positive evidence of treasonable correspondence between the Tory leaders and "James III." Harley's conviction is an important

constitutional landmark: it emphasised the principle of ministerial responsibility in that it ignored the plea that the sovereign's authority exonerated a minister from liability for his political actions.

This vindictiveness on the part of the Whigs produced an almost immediate Jacobite reaction in the country. In some of the chief towns in the midlands and north "James III.'s" birthday (10th June) was made a public holiday, and the magistrates made little attempt to curb the unruly behaviour of the mob. The mayor of Leeds, one of the towns where "the birthday" was joyously celebrated, had already let his fellow-townsmen know that he had never swallowed a bitterer pill than the oath of allegiance to the German king. Down in Hereford the staunch Whig Lord High Stewart, Sir John Coningsby, found it necessary to warn the mayor and corporation that he would "fetch soldiers from hell" to punish the townsmen if he again heard that they met together in the market-place to pledge "the damned Pretender's health in Hereford cider." In the south-western and north-western shires men made no secret of their antipathy for "George and Hanover;" and in August 1715 the Prussian ambassador in London reported to his government that during the eight months of Whig rule the Jacobite cause had gathered greater force than it ever had done during the four years when the Tories were in power. The brutal truth was thus clearly told: the Whigs by their vindictive methods goaded the country into a Jacobite rebellion.

What was required was resolute leadership, and that was what the Jacobites lacked. Had Ormonde remained in England, where he was trusted by the simple peasantry of the west country, and had he during the early summer of 1715 placed himself at their head, he would have at least caused the government considerable embarrassment, and might have carried through a Tory *coup d'état.* But at the Stuart "court" in Lorraine an accurate measure of the discontent against the Whigs in England was never taken: the "courtiers" were content to imagine that the days of the Hanoverian "usurpers" were numbered, and their petty jealousies and irresolution marred the progress of the work of preparation necessary for a desperate undertaking. This failure to strike in the early summer dashed to the ground the Jacobite hopes of success in England, and gave the Whigs time to learn the extent of the mischief and to arrest suspected local leaders before the armed rising took place.

On 6th September 1715, Mar, whom his contemporaries called "Bobbing John," raised the standard of rebellion at Kirkmichael "on the Braes of Mar;" and at the head of a force of wildly enthusiastic Murrays and Gordons he marched to Aberdeen to proclaim James Edward Stuart "King James VIII. of Scotland." Inverness, Dundee, Dunkeld, and Perth were soon in the hands of the rebels; and had Mar hurled himself against Edinburgh at once he would undoubtedly have taken the capital. But he hung about Perth, waiting for levies from the clans

and orders from his Stuart master; and when at last he decided to take the capital he found his road barred at Sheriffmuir by Argyll and a strong Lowland force. The two armies engaged, but the wild charge of Mar's Highlanders failed to dislodge the loyalists, and both sides retired to claim the day as a victory (13th November). On the same day another Jacobite army was brought to battle and defeated by loyalist forces at Preston in Lancashire: it consisted of the Catholic gentry of the north of England and a detachment of Mackintoshes from Mar's army. Six weeks later James Edward landed at Peterhead to find that his cause was hopelessly lost. Mar piloted him through the Highlands in the hope that his presence would infuse new courage into Jacobite hearts; but James Edward was not of the stuff of which rebel leaders are made, and his melancholy outlook on his cause and colourless personality repelled rather than aroused the clansmen. Early in 1716, therefore, Mar led his "king" back into exile.

During the crisis George kept a level head, and left everything to his ministers. He naturally could not bring himself to show any sympathy towards the rebels, and he was unmoved by the fate which overtook them. He ignored a motion passed in the Lords to the effect that he should exercise his prerogative of mercy by reprieving those rebel leaders whom he thought deserving of such clemency; and he showed singularly bad taste when he attended a ball on the day of Derwentwater's and Kenmure's execution. Actually the government behaved with commendable restraint in the hour of victory. Of the six peers condemned to death, one was pardoned and another escaped; and the number of the rank and file executed or imprisoned or sent to the "Plantations" was relatively small. During the unquiet time which preceded the rebellion the government had quickly piloted through parliament the famous Riot Act which made it a felony for rioters to refuse to disperse when called upon to do so by a magistrate; and after the back of the rebellion was broken the Septennial Act was passed to extend the life of the existing parliament and its successors to seven years.

This latter measure gave rise to a good deal of controversy. The government backers argued that the unsettled state of the country made it unsafe to hold elections; but their opponents ridiculed that argument, and boldly asserted that the measure was a discreditable dodge to ensure four more years of power for the Whigs. In the Lords, some of the peers protested that it was unconstitutional in that for four of the seven years of the life of the existing parliament the members could not truthfully be said to represent their constituents; and another group maintained that while there might reasonably be a case for making the life of parliament seven years, the innovation ought not to be brought in until after the elections. That the recent rebellion had disturbed the normal conditions of life in the country must be admitted, but how

far that was a justification for the introduction of the measure is another matter; and the subsequent behaviour of the Whigs does certainly lend colour to the Tory accusation that they meant to cling to power.

The government's skilful handling of foreign policy did much to weaken the Jacobite cause. From 1714 to 1721 the direction of foreign affairs was mainly in the hands of Stanhope; but at the same time a certain amount of credit is due to George himself, for he took the keenest interest in this branch of state business; and his Hanoverian minister Bernstorff, with whom Stanhope was in the closest touch, was recognised as a leading authority on the European situation. The interests of Hanover rather than those of Great Britain were admittedly George's and Berndorff's first consideration; but Stanhope had the shrewdness to see that they were coincident; and his skill as a diplomatist enabled him to make his royal master think that he was playing the Hanoverian game when all the time his aim was to end the diplomatic isolation which had menaced his country when the Whigs took office.

Stanhope was one of the ablest men in the ministry, and it is to be regretted that his claim to greatness has so often been ignored in popular history books. A product of Eton and Oxford, he was a man of scholarly attainments, and had fought with distinction during the War of the Spanish Succession. His command of the British forces in Spain not only gave him an intimate knowledge of that country, but allowed him to obtain that insight into diplomatic practice which was to stand him in such good stead when he was called upon to take charge of the Southern Department in the Whig ministry; and although he nominally shared with Townshend, the Secretary of State for the Northern Department, the responsibility for the government's foreign policy, he was, almost from the outset of his ministerial career, virtually left alone to deal with the European situation.

His first task was to find allies: they were essential for the security of the Hanoverian Succession upon which the whole future of the Whig party depended. Holland was a natural ally, and an understanding was soon reached with the States-General. But Stanhope knew that George was particularly eager to maintain his good relations with the Emperor Charles VI., and owing to the fact that the Dutch garrisoned the Barrier Fortresses, which were within the Austrian (formerly the Spanish) Netherlands, a considerable amount of bad feeling had been engendered between the Hague and Vienna. By November 1715, however, Stanhope had succeeded in smoothing out the more serious differences; and the new Barrier Treaty which was then arranged was the foundation upon which he raised in the following year the solid edifice of a political alliance between Austria, Great Britain, and Holland.

For long enough statesmen in London had taken the keenest interest in Baltic affairs, chiefly because from Baltic ports came the bulk of the supplies

of materials for ships' stores. The connection with Hanover was bound to quicken that interest; but Stanhope was much too wise to allow his government to be drawn into any arrangement which would give the Tories an opportunity of proclaiming that British forces were being used in the interests of "a miserable little German electorate;" and his handling of the situation in the Baltic, where Charles XII. of Sweden played the rôle of the arch-enemy of the other Baltic states, was masterly. George's Baltic allies were considerably put out by the British policy, the keynote of which was a benevolent neutrality with a strong squadron of men-o'-war in the northern sea to protect British merchantmen from Swedish attacks: they hoped that George on coming into possession of the British crown would manage to divert the forces of his new kingdom into the war against the Swedes. It was not expedient for them to know that the officer commanding the British men-o'-war was instructed to retaliate with all the forces at his disposal in the event of an attack on British commerce.

Stanhope's own colleagues suspected him of being much too pro-Hanoverian in his policy; and this suspicion ultimately split the ministry. Peter the Great of Russia was a member of the anti-Swedish league; but he mistrusted Hanover's British connection on the ground that it might interfere with his plan to make his own country the dominant power in the Baltic; and it was suspected that he would welcome the opportunity of making his peace with Charles XII. It was part of the general plan of campaign that the Swedes should be attacked by a Russian army operating from Mecklenburg-Schwerin: when Peter moved his men into the duchy and then announced that owing to the lateness of the season they would not attack but remain there during the winter of 1716–7 George and Bernstorff were greatly alarmed. The relations of the two allies were jeopardised by the protestations which followed; and for a time it appeared as though they would come to blows. Townshend and his friends in the ministry believed that in such an eventuality their country would be drawn into a war against Russia, probably allied to Sweden, and they wished to avoid such a risk at all costs. Stanhope, on the other hand, stood firm on the demand that the Russians must be withdrawn; and Peter's acquiescence avoided a ministerial crisis, though it failed to close the breach between the two groups in the ministry.

Stanhope, as has been seen, had a first-hand knowledge of Spain, and it was natural that he should attempt to solve the Spanish Question. The situation was complicated by the fact that Philip V. of Spain refused to recognise the cession of the Spanish possessions in Italy to Charles VI., whereas the latter persisted in regarding himself as the rightful king of Spain. To have shown too much sympathy with the Spaniards, with whose country the great Whig merchants wished to return to normal conditions of trading, would have alienated the Austrians and offended George; and it was therefore necessary for Stanhope

to walk warily in his attempt to regularise the commercial relations of the two countries. The reciprocal commercial treaties which were signed at the end of 1715 were barren achievements, for the Spanish minister Alberoni was bent upon regaining from the Habsburgs the Italian lands which they had secured after the war of the Spanish Succession; and Stanhope would not jeopardise Anglo-Austrian relations for the sake of a *rapprochement* with Spain.

It must be admitted that Stanhope's most spectacular diplomatic achievement, the Quadruple Alliance of 1718, was largely the outcome of an extraordinary piece of good luck. On 1st September 1715 Louis XIV. died: he was succeeded by his great-grandson Louis XV., who was a sickly boy of five. Philip Duke of Orléans seized the regency: his cousin Philip V. of Spain at once renounced his promise never to put forward his claims to the throne and proclaimed himself the boy-king's heir. To maintain his position as regent Orléans was driven into British arms; and he was under no delusions that the price which he would be expected to pay for British support would be the recognition of the Hanoverian Succession, which would carry with it an undertaking to withdraw all aid from the Jacobites, and the strict adherence of France to the system of Europe as defined at Utrecht in 1713. Orléans accepted these conditions; and the benevolent neutrality of the French government during "the Fifteen" contributed in no small measure to the ease with which the Whig ministry put down the rebellion. Stanhope perceived that a Franco-British understanding would make the two countries the arbiters of Europe; and with the active collaboration of that "ugliest of created souls," the Abbé Dubois, he arranged the treaty signed by the two countries in November 1716. Townshend and his friends in the ministry insisted that the Dutch should be invited to become a party to it: hence the Triple Alliance of January 1717, which was as great a "diplomatic revolution" as the Austro-French Alliance of 1756.

So acute were the differences of opinion in the ministry on this question of foreign policy that a breach was unavoidable. An attempt to paper over the cracks was made when Townshend in December 1716 was transferred to the office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; but his continued refusal to subscribe to his colleagues' plans and his opposition to them in parliament led to his dismissal in the following April; and as a protest against this treatment his friends, Devonshire, Methuen, Orford, Pulteney, and Walpole, resigned from the ministry. For a short time these disaffected Whigs formed a discreditable alliance with the Tories to embarrass their former colleagues.

In the summer of 1717 it was made clear that Spain meant to attack Austria. Charles VI., his hands full with a Turkish war, appealed to the Whig ministry for the assistance which was promised in the treaty of alliance concluded between them in the previous year. Stanhope was in a quandary. The country was opposed to the idea of a Spanish war; and yet the government suspected that Alberoni had

already conceived the plan to make an alliance between Spain and Sweden with the avowed object of assisting the Jacobites in England and Scotland. By skilful manœuvring in diplomatic channels Stanhope frustrated Alberoni's schemes: his reply to the Spanish government activities in Jacobite circles was the Quadruple Alliance of 20th August 1718, whereby Austria, France, Great Britain, and Holland adopted a formula for the solution of the Spanish problem. Nine days before the treaty was signed the British admiral Byng shattered the Spanish fleet off Cape Passaro, although war was not declared. When the Spaniards realised into what difficulties they had been led by Alberoni, and the king dismissed him (December 1719), the solution of the problem was complete; and it was formally regularised by the Treaty of Madrid (June 1721).

The death of the warlike Charles XII. during the siege of Friedrickshall in December 1718 eased the tension in the Baltic. It did not altogether remove Stanhope's difficulties. The fear of Russian domination in the Baltic was the bogey of George's Hanoverian ministers. They would have liked Stanhope to form a coalition against Russia, and were delighted when, as a result of the Quadruple Alliance, Hanover and Prussia were brought closer together; but Stanhope had no intention of waging a war, the result of which would be beneficial for the members of the proposed anti-Russian league (Denmark, Hanover, and Prussia); and it was his aim to leave Sweden strong enough to hold the Russians in check in the Baltic. Cartaret was chosen for the unravelling of the tangled affairs of the Baltic Question; and Stanhope was dead some months when the Treaty of Nystad placed the seal on his policy (September 1721).

The government's record was not as good in home as it was in foreign affairs. The whole trend of Whig domestic policy during the period 1714–21 was vengeance on the Tories. In 1717 Convocation was suppressed solely because the lower clergy used the assembly as a convenient place to voice their Tory and Jacobite sympathies and to criticise the behaviour of the Latitudinarian bishops appointed by the government to rule over the Church. Two years later the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts were repealed. This was a wise move forward towards the ideal of religious toleration; but it was none the less a purely party measure; and it is a matter of interest to recall that it was Walpole who successfully opposed Stanhope's proposal to repeal the Test Act because he was convinced that the "unpopularity of such a measure" would shipwreck the Whig party. Anne's creation of twelve peers to carry the Treaty of Utrecht still rankled with the Whigs; and Sunderland, who was primarily responsible for the ousting of Townshend and in the reconstructed ministry successively held a number of important offices, brought forward a bill which, had it been carried, would have made the peerage an independent Whig oligarchy. This Peerage Bill, which was before parliament in 1718–9, proposed that the sovereign should not be permitted to add more than six

peers to the existing number and that the Scotch peers should be increased from sixteen to twenty-five. Cowper was the only great Whig lord who opposed the measure; but it was Walpole's speech against it at the committee stage in the Commons which sounded its death-knell (December 1719).

Sunderland was politically ruined by the scandal of "the South Sea Bubble." The South Sea Company had been formed in 1711 by Harley: it was a sincere attempt to deal with the problem of the national debt; for in return for specified commercial privileges the company became responsible for £10,000,000 of floating debt. The company's record of trading until 1719 was good, and the shares maintained a high level. A proposal by the directors in that year to take up about £32,000,000 of government stock and to pay a premium of £7,500,000, to carry interest at the rate of 5 per cent. until 1727 and 4 per cent. thereafter, for the privilege greatly attracted Sunderland and many of his colleagues; and despite the warnings of Walpole, who was now back in the government and was regarded as possessing a sound financial knowledge, a measure drafted on the lines of the proposal was taken before parliament and passed. Everyone bought South Sea Company stock, and the country has probably never known, except perhaps in the early days of the Railway Age, a period of more reckless speculation. Shares soared, and by the middle of 1720 the £100 stock touched the amazingly high level of £1060. The directors, blind to the fact that the phenomenal success of their own company was part of the mad craze for stock gambling which had the country in its toils, proceeded against some illegal companies; and under the cold light of the legal proceedings which followed speculators in South Sea and other stock[1] learnt those lessons of caution which are so disconcerting to company promoters. By 21st September 1720 South Sea stock had fallen to £150; and all over the country men and women were faced with ruin. Tales were told how the members of the royal household and the ministers of the crown were intimately concerned with what the ruined could only regard as "a gigantic fraud;" and George, who was on one of his visits to Hanover, came pell-mell back to meet the crisis.

The country was in a ferment. Even in a House of Commons predominantly Whig angry cries were raised against the government, and threats of impeachment were hurled at the leading ministers. An inquiry was ordered; and it revealed how deeply implicated were those in high places. Aislabie, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the two Craggs, father and son, who held the offices of Postmaster-general and Secretary of State respectively, were hotly accused of corrupt practices; and men like Sunderland and Stanhope could not escape censure. Aislabie was expelled from the Commons; the elder

[1] It would be impossible here to give a list of the joint-stock companies which came into existence about this time. There were companies to transmute quicksilver into gold, to import Spanish jackasses, to market "perpetual motion," and a host of other absurdities.

Craggs poisoned himself; his son died of the smallpox on the day the report of the committee of inquiry was presented. So affected was Stanhope by the bitter attack levelled against him by Wharton that he burst a blood-vessel in his excitement and died (February 1721); and two months later Sunderland, despite his strenuous endeavours to maintain his innocence,[1] bowed to the storm of popular disapproval of his conduct and resigned.

Aislabie's place was given to Walpole, the one Whig politician in whom the country had confidence at that moment of crisis; and on the ministerial reconstruction which followed Sunderland's resignation he also took the office of First Lord of the Treasury, thus virtually becoming the head of the government. Townshend, his brother-in-law, and Cartaret were his more conspicuous colleagues: they became the principal secretaries of state. Walpole was a remarkable man. Uncultured except in his appreciation of good pictures, coarsely mannered, morally unprincipled, overwhelmed by the love of power, a poor House of Commons man in the sense that he was no orator, he had already acquired a first-rate knowledge of public finance; and his ability to make the most of his opportunities (which his detractors called "his luck") enabled him to guide the destinies of his country with conspicuous success for more than twenty years.

Robert Walpole was born at Houghton in Norfolk in 1676. He was educated at Eton and Cambridge, and was destined by his father for the Church; but the death of his elder brothers changed these plans, and he was taken away from Cambridge before the conclusion of his course to assist his father in the management of the family estates. His father died in November 1700, and Robert came into the family estates and an income of £2000 a year: four months previously he had married Catherine Shorter, "a woman of exquisite beauty" and the daughter of a Baltic timber merchant. The Walpoles owned two Norfolk "pocket boroughs;" and in January 1701 Robert became the member for Lynn. For seven years he suffered the obscurity of the average private member; but in 1708 he came to the notice of Godolphin and Marlborough, and was by them recommended for the office of Paymaster of the Forces. He was one of the victims of the political landslide which overwhelmed the Whigs in 1710, and was singled out by the Tories as a fitting butt for their vengeance. Charged with peculation, he was found guilty (although he was almost certainly innocent) and sent to the Tower. When the king asked Townshend—later to be known as "Turnip" Townshend owing to his keen interest in the growing of roots—to form a ministry Walpole was offered the paymastership of the forces, and in the following year (1715) was transferred to the chancellorship of the exchequer. A serious illness troubled him during 1715–6, and consequently interfered with his duties as minister. He was very much pro-Townshend

[1] Sunderland was proved to have accepted £50,000 of stock in the company without paying for it.

Kneller.

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GEORGE I.

in the quarrel with Stanhope ; and, as has been seen, resigned when Townshend was dismissed in 1717. But he left behind him a sound record as a financier, and his scheme to form a sinking fund for the reduction of the national debt was in advance of the times, and compares not unfavourably with the scheme adopted by the younger William Pitt towards the end of the century. About 1720 Walpole formed a friendship with Caroline of Anspach, the wife of the Prince of Wales : it was the beginning of a political association which lasted until Caroline's death. Sunderland brought Walpole back into the ministry when the crisis of " the South Sea Bubble " overtook the country. Although the new Chancellor of the Exchequer was among those who had speculated —and to advantage—in the stock of the company, he never for a moment believed in its financial soundness. Sunderland's resignation virtually left the leadership of the ministry in Walpole's hands.

His first task was the restoration of the public credit. It was well known that the Jacobites were actively at work exploiting the crisis for their own ends ; and Atterbury's Plot, the danger from which was incidentally grossly exaggerated, indicated the extent of the danger from the enemies of the Hanoverian Succession. Walpole recognised that there was nothing to be gained by crying over spilt milk ; and for that reason he resisted the popular demand that the fraudulent directors ought to be hanged. He was quite ready to punish them for fraud in the usual way : he was more concerned as to how to put the company in a position to meet its obligations in a normal way. The reward of his successful handling of the situation was the speedy return of confidence, which was reflected by the comfortable majority obtained by his party at the elections of 1722. Sunderland would undoubtedly have attempted to force himself back into the government, and had he done so would have claimed to direct affairs ; but before parliament assembled Sunderland was dead from heart failure ; and Walpole shared with his brother-in-law Townshend the leadership of the government.

Nevertheless for the last five years of George I.'s reign the central figure on the political stage was this coarse Norfolk squire, whom the ordinary people of the land believed to be able to " convert stones into gold." The king had the utmost confidence in him : he had parted with him once, he said, but he would never repeat that mistake ; and the two men worked together in perfect harmony, since George was prepared to allow Walpole a free hand to direct the government of his kingdom. *Quieta non movere* or " let sleeping dogs lie " was the keynote of Walpole's policy. Above all things the country must enjoy the blessings of peace at home and abroad ; then trade would prosper, and the commercial prosperity would ensure for the country an adequate supply of the riches which were so essential for a nation eager to play a great part in world affairs. There were to be no innovations ; and, if necessary, principles were

to be surrendered in the face of opposition which threatened to disturb the much-to-be-desired tranquillity.

The latter point was well borne out by the government's handling of the crisis which arose on the attempt to give Ireland a new copper coinage. In 1722 a Wolverhampton man named Wood purchased from "the Schulenburg" a patent to issue a new copper currency in Ireland. The proposal was regarded as another example of English dishonesty towards the Irish people; and Wood's stupid threat "to pour the coinage down the throats of the people" merely increased the discontent. It was Swift in his *Drapier Letters* who lashed public opinion to that fury of excitement which borders on rebellion; and rather than attempt to weather the storm the ministry ran quickly for port and ordered the cancellation of the patent and the compensation of Wood.

In the field of foreign affairs, however, it was not so easy to keep the peace. Friendly relations were maintained with France, and Cardinal Fleury, who succeeded Orléans in 1726, was as eager as the English government not to risk a breach between the two countries. But Austria and Spain were restive. Charles VI. was determined to force upon Europe the Pragmatic Sanction, which provided for the succession of his daughter Maria Theresa to his possessions on his death; and Spain, despite her recent protestations of friendship, meant to oust the British from Gibraltar and to place her king's stepson Don Carlos in Parma. Charles's foundation of the Imperial and Royal East India Company of Ostend in 1722, with the object of obtaining for his subjects in the Netherlands a share of the trade in the East Indies, was hardly calculated to improve Austro-British relations; and the alliance which he made with Philip of Spain three years later bound him to the Spanish design to regain Gibraltar (Treaty of Vienna). The British reply was the Treaty of Hanover, which formed a counter-alliance between France, Great Britain, Hanover, and Prussia in September 1725. Townshend negotiated the treaty: it was not easy to secure George's support for it. That the king disliked it intensely he frankly admitted: it exposed him personally to the risk of a breach with his imperial superior Charles VI. and his beloved Hanover to the dangers of invasion; and he could not for the life of him understand why these risks should be encountered merely to safeguard the British position at Gibraltar and to break a company of Austrian merchants who wished to share with Englishmen some of the East Indian trade. Townshend's tact and George's good sense triumphed; and the Hanoverian opposition to the treaty collapsed. George was somewhat comforted when in the following year Denmark, Holland, and Sweden joined the alliance; but the defection of Prussia in October revived his fears; and the possibility of Russian intervention on Austria's behalf haunted him. The presence in the Baltic of a strong British fleet was the government's security against Russian intervention; and George, who had a very limited

knowledge of naval affairs, must be forgiven if he failed to appreciate the value of that move.

Great Britain and Spain were at war in January 1727, and Gibraltar was besieged. Would Austria go to the rescue of her ally? That was the question which agitated the chancellaries of Europe; and feverish efforts were made, by Fleury in particular, to prevent an European conflagration. Palm, the Austrian ambassador in London, nearly wrecked everything by his stupidity: he issued to the British nation a "memorial" in which he criticised statements made in the King's Speech at the opening of the parliamentary session in January; and his impudent interference in British domestic affairs was resented even by the members of the Tory opposition. The country was solidly behind the ministry when Palm was given his passports and told to leave for Austria. Townshend's treaty stood the test of this crisis: Charles was presented with an ultimatum; and faced with the prospect of war, he agreed to the allied terms (May). The Spaniards were now isolated, and quickly saw that the game was up: the Spanish ambassador at Vienna was thereupon ordered to agree to the preliminaries which Charles had already accepted (June).

George was not to know of this last triumph for the ministry. On 3rd June 1727 he had left London for Hanover: a week later, as he was on his way through Holland, he had a stroke. The physicians bled him; but their ministrations were of no avail, for the stroke had left him paralysed and speechless; and only by means of feeble signs could he convey to his attendants his wish to be carried to his brother's house in Osnabrück. He was unconscious when he reached there late on the evening of the 10th: on the morning of the 12th he died in the arms of the faithful Mustapha. His body remained at Osnabrück until 30th August, when it was buried in the family vault of the Guelphs at Hanover.

WALPOLE IS SAID (probably falsely) to have killed two horses as he rode hell-for-leather to Richmond to announce to the Prince of Wales that his father was dead. On his arrival he found the prince taking a siesta; and it was with difficulty that the servants could be persuaded to waken their master. The new king received the news calmly (there is almost certainly no truth in the picturesque story that he replied to Walpole's announcement "dat is one big lie"); and Walpole was dismissed with the command to take all future instructions "from Compton." The Compton to whom George II. thus committed the leadership of the government was Sir Spencer Compton (later Earl of Wilmington), the Speaker of the House of Commons and Treasurer of the Prince of Wales' household: by common report he was "a plodding, heavy fellow with great application and no talents." Walpole did as he was told, and saw Compton in his house at Chiswick: he found that the new head of the government, despite the reputation which he enjoyed for his knowledge of "forms and precedents,"

was quite unable to draft the customary declaration to be made by the King to the privy council, and he generously helped him out of his difficulty. There can be no doubt that Walpole believed that his political star had set: however, as will soon be seen, he had reckoned without Compton's incompetence and Caroline's influence over her husband.

George II. was in his forty-fourth year: he was a dapper little man who took himself very seriously. He could not be described as handsome, but his features were striking. His forehead was broad and high, and receded gradually back to the crown of his head; his chin was "firm and handsome;" his nose long and regularly shaped; and a pair of large blue eyes and a full, red-lipped mouth contrasted pleasantly with a complexion which was described as of "a deep purplish-red."

The strained relations of his father and mother marred his early life; and after the divorce he was sent to live with his grandmother the Electress Sophia. There is little information about his education. He was instructed in Latin, French, and later English, and was singularly ill at ease in all these languages; but he had a genuine delight in history; and in his later years he was regarded as an authority on the genealogies of the German princely families in general and of the Guelphs in particular. In 1705 George married Wilhelmina Charlotte Caroline, the daughter of the Margraf of Brandenburg-Anspach; and in the following year, as a sort of preparation for the Hanoverian Succession, he was the recipient of a number of English titles. In 1708 his father sent him to join Marlborough in the Low Countries. His bravery at Oudenarde, where he led a charge of Hanoverian dragoons, delighted the British soldiers in Marlborough's army. The exploit also delighted George: he returned from the wars convinced that he was a great soldier and an authority on military affairs. His English ministers were to find his bellicosity most disturbing.

George was at loggerheads with his father before they came into possession of the British throne; and the bad feeling between them was only increased when the prince deliberately set out to win the favour of his father's English subjects. At a court where everyone from the king downwards loathed England and her people, the prince's remark that the English were "the handsomest, the best-shaped, the best-natured, and lovingest people in the world," acted as a spark in a magazine of powder; and everything was done to humiliate him in the eyes of the nation. There is something rather petty about the way in which George I. treated his son. He ordered the dismissal of his friends: he tried to keep him unreasonably short of money, although when the civil list was voted it was understood in parliament that a part of it would be apportioned for the maintenance of the prince's household. Matters came to an ugly head when in 1717 George I. insisted that Newcastle should be one of the godparents of the prince's baby son George William: the father wanted to invite his uncle

to take that honour; and so angry was he at Newcastle's appearance in the bedroom where the christening took place that he shook his fist in the duke's face and exclaimed in bad English, "You are a rascal, I shall find you." George I. believed that it was the challenge to a duel, and confined his son to his room. The prince apologised to his father, but he was refused admittance to St James's Palace, and with his wife he went to reside first in Albemarle Street and later at Leicester House in Leicester Fields.

That Leicester House became the rendezvous of the members of the parliamentary opposition was chiefly due to the king's announcement that no one who attended the prince's receptions would be received in the royal presence. Foreign ambassadors were notified that visits to the prince would be officially "disapproved;" and the judges were ordered to find legal precedents which would enable the king to have the custody of his grandchildren. Sunderland's Peerage Bill had the royal support because it was believed that the prince on his accession would indulge in a reckless creation of peers from the ranks of his Tory and discontented Whig friends; and George I. even toyed with a proposal to sever Hanover from England in order to make it impossible for the prince to inherit the electorate. The limit to which the father was prepared to go is indicated by his readiness to listen to Berkeley's plan to kidnap and ship the prince to America.

This stupid family quarrel did as much as anything to discredit George I. with his British subjects. Walpole knew this, and when invited to join the ministry in 1720 he made the reconciliation of the king and his son the condition on which he would accept the invitation. It was said that he was mainly responsible for persuading the prince to send a letter of apology to his father and to follow it up with an expression of regret at a personal meeting. But the reconciliation which Walpole planned was hollow and unreal. Foreign ambassadors might be allowed to pay the customary courtesy visits to Leicester House, and royal guards might be posted at the entrances, but George I. retained the custody of the prince's children, though he now allowed the father to visit them; and whenever he went to Hanover he refused to allow the prince to act as regent. This unsatisfactory state of affairs continued until the end of George I.'s reign.

Many of George I.'s faults were repeated and emphasised in his son. After the fashion of the times mistresses were installed in the royal palaces; but with the exception perhaps of Henrietta Howard, whose services secured for her cuckold of a husband (he eventually became the Earl of Suffolk) a comfortable annuity, none of them was greatly enriched by their association with the king. There was something inexpressibly callous in George II.'s habit of commanding the queen to superintend the arrangements which had to be made as each new mistress was established in the household: it was probably part of his delusion that he

was master of his own house. For if there was one thing upon which George II. prided himself, it was that he was not the sort of man to allow any woman to dominate him; and he loved to poke fun at those husbands whom he believed were under the thumbs of their wives. The truth is that probably few of his kingly predecessors—probably only Henry VI.—were more successfully wife-ridden than this little martinet of a husband who tried to rule his family as he would a company of soldiers. A popular quip put it thus:

> You may strut, dapper George, but 'twill all be in vain;
> We know 'tis Queen Caroline, not you that reign.

It is a striking tribute to the character of this remarkable woman that she could so skilfully conceal from her husband her complete mastery over him.

Caroline of Anspach may not be entitled to the compliment of being a great queen; but she was, as one of her biographers has observed, "a true-hearted woman;" and her influence upon the course of political affairs from the time of her husband's accession to her death in 1737 cannot be over-estimated. As a young girl she was thought good-looking: to the end of her life she retained a certain queenly dignity which was never overdone. Caroline was not a brilliant woman: she was coarse-tongued and revelled in wit whose chief merit was its broadness; and although she was widely read her knowledge of many subjects was at best superficial. She liked clever people, if their politics were right; and she shared with her husband and father-in-law a genuine appreciation of music, particularly of Handel's music. Caroline's claim to greatness rests upon her knowledge of human nature and capacity for making sound judgments. Openly to have opposed her husband would have called forth all the pettiness in his nature: she preferred flattering his insatiable vanity and making him believe that she was the most subservient of wives in order to get her own way; and though George himself would have been the last person in the world to have admitted it, he respected her advice and acted upon it—believing always that it was his own.

It was Caroline who kept Walpole's star in the political heavens. She had a great opinion of the minister's abilities: she knew that Walpole alone stood between the Hanoverian Succession and Jacobitism. Sharing the popular faith in Walpole's financial genius, she easily persuaded George that Walpole was the only politician in the kingdom who could furnish him with the money he loved so much. Fortunately Compton did not take long to recognise his own political incapacity, and his request to be excused from leading a ministry made it possible for the king to go back on his previous decision without loss of dignity. "Compton's evaporation," as a contemporay described it, was Walpole's opportunity; and readily agreeing to the minor ministerial adjustments proposed by the king, rather to let the minister understand that he was not to be given a free

hand than to strengthen the ministry, he returned to continue the work which had been begun under the previous monarch.

Walpole was at his best in the House of Commons when, at the end of June, he moved the address " of condolence, congratulation and thanks " to the new king; and in one of his rare flights of oratory he described how George's " immediate succession had banished all our grief." When a few days later he moved that " by reason of the largeness of his family and the necessity of settling a household for his royal consort " the civil list ought to be increased from £700,000 to £830,000 a year, there were murmurs on both sides of the House. The Tory Shippen was at once on his feet to move the amendment that the civil list should remain unaltered. He reminded the House how Queen Anne had found it possible to use part of her income to augment the livings of the poorer clergy, and argued that what had been done in her time could be done by her Hanoverian successors. The speech was spoilt by a bitter attack on Walpole's administration. Shippen admitted that he was not surprised that the proposal was made, for the government spent vast sums in the maintenance of a secret service which was as unnecessary as it was unconstitutional; and the mismanagement of foreign policy had cost the country considerable sums of money. It was a splendid piece of oratory, but no one rose to second Shippen's amendment, and Walpole's motion was therefore carried. The ease with which the business was done was greatly admired by George: he now forgot that once he had called " his splendid Walpole " a rogue and a rascal.

The coronation took place in October. It was a magnificent ceremony, and passed off without incident. The Jacobites, however, consoled themselves with gibes at the king's pompous behaviour: they also said that the bulk of the jewels with which Caroline was adorned were specially hired for the occasion.

Foreign affairs at once claimed Walpole's attention. Neither Austria nor Spain wished to ratify the preliminaries to which both had agreed to in the summer of 1727. There were indications that the bond which Stanhope had forged between France and his own country was weakening; and the brilliant Elizabeth Farnese, whom Philip V. of Spain had taken as his second wife in 1714, hoped for an *entente* between France and Spain. The congress which sat at Soissons in 1728–9 to settle the affairs of Europe proved abortive, and the war clouds again loomed into the European skies. The alternative was the coercion of Austria and Spain by the allies; but such a plan postulated war, and the truth was that the leading members of the alliance meant to avoid war at all costs. Fleury in France, Walpole in Great Britain, George II. in Hanover, worked feverishly for a peaceful settlement; but each suspected the other of playing for his own hand, and the atmosphere of distrust which was thus created stiffened the obstinacy of the two delinquents.

Townshend and his friends in the ministry, obsessed by the hurt which

British trade suffered from the strained relations of Great Britain and Spain, wished to detach the Spaniards from the Austrians by offering them generous terms; and they were prepared to assent to the restoration of Gibraltar if the Spaniards made that one of the conditions of a settlement. Walpole, on the other hand, would have detached Austria from Spain: his plan was naturally supported by George, who was greatly afraid that the Townshend alternative would provoke the Emperor to war, and therefore an invasion of Hanover. But Townshend had his way, and the result was the Treaty of Seville (1729), by which the Spanish claim to Parma and Piacenza was recognised as a *quid pro quo* for the renunciation of the restrictions placed on British trade with the Spanish territories; and the privileges granted to the Ostend Company were to be withdrawn.

George was in a torment of suspense by this move. He was as convinced that the Austrians would enter Hanover as the Tory critics of the treaty were that it was another discreditable attempt to carry the electorate " on England's back." When the Spaniards found that the allies were hesitant about executing those conditions which related to Spanish rights in Austrian lands in Italy they repudiated the treaty, and the pacification of Europe seemed as remote as ever. Townshend's plan proved to be ineffective, and the differences of opinion which developed in the ministry over the question of foreign affairs made his retirement inevitable and ministerial reconstruction necessary. Walpole was now the unchallenged head of the ministry, and was therefore in a position to put his plan of detaching Austria from Spain into operation; and after a series of delicate negotiations the Emperor was constrained to accept the Second Treaty of Vienna (1731). Walpole guaranteed the Pragmatic Sanction on condition that Charles VI. suspended the Ostend Company and allowed the Spaniards to occupy Parma and Piacenza. A few months later the Spaniards renewed the Treaty of Seville (1732), and British men-o'-war escorted Elizabeth Farnese's elder son Don Carlos to the Italian duchies.

Walpole has often been blamed for this peace settlement. In his search for peace, it is argued, he committed his country to war by pledging her to support the Pragmatic Sanction. His Tory contemporaries persisted in maintaining that he placed the claims of Hanover before those of his own country: some of his Whig friends believed that his attempt to maintain the good relations between his own country and Austria would seriously weaken Franco-British relations. No one would acclaim Walpole as a great foreign minister; but these criticisms are unjust, and they obscure the solid achievements gained by his diplomacy. Chiefly through his efforts Europe was spared a great war; he retained Gibraltar in the face of persistent demands for its restoration by the Spaniards; he broke the power of the Ostend Company; and for a time at least prevented a *rapprochement* between France and Spain. That the guarantee of the Pragmatic Sanction brought war cannot be denied; but the peace which preceded the outbreak of

the war of the Austrian Succession enabled Great Britain to place herself in a strong financial position ready for the emergency of war; and the Tory accusation of pro-Hanoverian sympathy is completely answered by the fact that not all the Hanoverian demands were granted.

While ministers and diplomatists worked in the great capitals of Europe to avert war, George and his brother-in-law Frederick William of Prussia conducted a tiresome feud on their own account. The Prussian king felt aggrieved at his wife's share of her mother's estate; and was more annoyed when her uncle, the Prince-bishop of Osnabrück, left George the bulk of his estate and her only his jewels. George and Frederick William hated each other intensely: the former was jealous of the militarism which had been so successfully introduced into Prussia; the latter could not forget that the woman whom he professed to have loved had married the British king. The Emperor had assigned to them the task of bringing order out of chaos in Mecklenburg; and they could not agree upon the measures which ought to be taken for this end. So matters went from bad to worse, and the bad blood was thickened by an exchange of nicknames. George dubbed his brother-in-law "the Archbeadle of the Holy Roman Empire:" Frederick William retaliated with "the Comedian" for George. Hanoverians were impressed into Prussian service by Frederick William's recruiting sergeants, and Prussian hay was carried off by Hanoverian soldiers for their horses. George's peremptory order for the arrest of Prussian soldiers travelling with passports in his electorate brought matters to a head. Frederick William challenged him to a duel: George accepted the challenge, and seconds were named. It was now time for the politicians to intervene, and they proposed that the dispute might be as honourably settled by arbitration. George would have none of their plans: he was ready to fight the duel. Frederick William thereupon massed a powerful army on the Hanoverian frontier. Whether it was the presence of these soldiers or a sudden return to sanity which made George at last see reason it is difficult to know; but after fussily preparing to meet force by force George agreed to the suggested arbitration; and by April 1730 a settlement was reached. But the two monarchs still retained their hatred of each other.

This stupid quarrel was destined to have an unpleasant reaction upon George's family circle. His eldest son Frederick professed an undying love for his cousin Sophia Dorothea Wilhelmina of Prussia; and long ago George I. and his daughter had agreed that the young people should marry. The Prussian queen would have made doubly sure of this family alliance by marrying her eldest son (the future Frederick the Great) to her brother's second daughter Amelia; but the animosity between the two fathers ruined such a plan; and George's son Frederick, already committed to the Guelph tradition of being on the worst of terms with his father, preferred to regard the breakdown of these

marriage projects as due to his father's determination further to humiliate him. Walpole and his political successors were to hear more of this family quarrel before death prematurely carried off the prince.

The peace which Walpole and Fleury so much desired was not to come to Europe. On 1st February 1733, Augustus *the Physically Strong*, King of Poland and Elector of Saxony, died; and the disputed succession which followed in the Polish kingdom involved some of the European powers in war. The late king's son, Augustus *the Morally Weak*, supported by Austria and Russia, secured election to the throne: his rival Stanislaus Leczynski, a former king of the country and the father-in-law of the French king Louis XV., made ready with the assistance of France to oust Augustus. Every eye was turned on London. What would Walpole and his colleagues decide to do? He was bound to both Austria and France; the bellicose little king, and even the more level-headed queen, would have supported the Emperor without any more ado. But Walpole had no desire to dissipate his country's strength in a war which had no great interest to Great Britain; and his one aim was to localise the hostilities and to force the belligerents to accept peace at the earliest possible moment. George himself conceived the bold plan of effecting an alliance between Austria and Spain; and much to his delight he found a formula upon which an understanding could be raised. But the Emperor hesitated until it was too late: France had already brought Spain over to her side by the first of the *Pactes de Famille*; and the reverses which the imperial armies suffered only served to inflame George's martial temper. Bluntly Walpole warned Caroline that "her crown would at last as surely come to be fought for as the crown of Poland" if the court continued on its mad career towards intervention on Austria's behalf; and the warning cooled George's hot head. So the War of the Polish Succession ran its own course; and Walpole confined his efforts to mediation between the belligerents, although even some of his ministerial colleagues were as eager as the king for armed intervention against France. His policy is now perfectly understandable, for he was aware of the terms of the *Pactes de Famille* of November 1733 by which France and Spain pledged themselves to "eternal and irrevocable union," to guarantee each other's territories, to refuse recognition of the Pragmatic Sanction, to expel the British from Gibraltar, and to hamper British commerce; and the whole of his mediation was directed towards the cancellation of some of those pledges. The formula which he laid before the warring powers at Vienna in 1735 was the consummation of that policy. France agreed to withdraw her support of Stanislaus on the promise of the Emperor that the former Polish king should be invested with the Duchy of Lorraine, which was to be incorporated within the French kingdom on Stanislaus's death; and the sop for this dismemberment of the imperial territories was the French guarantee of the Pragmatic Sanction.

Elizabeth Farnese's son received the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, thereby placing in southern Italy a Bourbon dynasty which remained there until the nineteenth century; and Sardinia obtained a valuable rectification of her frontiers. Parma and Piacenza were restored to the Emperor, and were bestowed upon the dispossessed Duke of Lorraine, who in 1736 married his daughter Maria Theresa. The definitive treaty (the Third Treaty of Vienna) was signed in 1738. Not for nothing had Walpole boasted to Caroline in 1734: "Madame, there are fifty thousand men slain this year in Europe, and not one Englishman."

While the Powers fought out the question of the succession to the Polish throne Walpole experienced a trying time at home. In February 1733 he rose in his place in the Commons to move that the House should go into committee "to consider of the most proper methods for the better security and improvement of the duties and revenues already charged upon and payable from tobacco and wines." The opposition shrieked their disapproval of this excise scheme. It was, opposition members said, a veiled attempt to undermine the sacred liberties of the British people. The Englishman had proudly regarded his home as his castle; but the excisemen required to operate the pernicious scheme proposed by Walpole would invade that castle armed with a government warrant; and the people were warned that there would be a return to those execrable methods which the collectors of the poll-tax had employed towards the daughters of free-born Englishmen in Wat Tyler's day.

George was whole-heartedly in favour of the Excise Bill. Walpole had persuaded him that his scheme would increase the revenue and lower duties, check smuggling and fraud, and enhance the Port of London's commercial importance. The Prince of Wales, on the other hand, was an "opposition man;" and he delighted to walk in the streets and applaud the shouts of "no slavery, no excise, no wooden shoes." Once again Walpole bowed to the storm of popular disapproval. In April he told his ministerial friends with a good deal of sadness (for he was convinced of the soundness of his proposals) that "this dance, it will no further go;" and on the following day he informed the Commons that the government had decided not to proceed with the Excise Bill.

A quarrel between George and his eldest son was Walpole's next problem. Frederick was annoyed that a husband (William IV. of Orange) had been found for his sister Anne before he was provided with a wife; and egged on by his politician friends, who were the chief opponents to Walpole's government, the prince confronted his father with three demands. He must be given an income suitable for his position as heir to the throne; he must be provided with a wife; and he must be given a regiment and allowed to serve with it on the Rhine. George was prepared to concede the first two demands on an undertaking by the prince that he would in the future treat his mother more courteously; but

he was not prepared to allow his first-born whom he had already described as " the greatest ass and the greatest liar and the greatest canaille and the greatest beast in the whole world " to become a military rival; and for that reason he refused the request for a regiment. On a visit to Hanover in 1735, George discovered a bride for his son: she was Augusta of Saxe-Gotha; and arrangements were made for the marriage to take place in the spring of the following year.

George had also discovered in Hanover another mistress—Amelia Countess von Walmoden. Having to leave her tried his temper badly; and as soon as his son's marriage was over (it took place in April) he hastened back to Hanover and " the Walmoden." Caroline was tired of his infidelities, and an estrangement developed between them. Walpole urged her to hide her resentment and to accept " the Walmoden " as she had accepted Henrietta Howard and the other " chargeable " ladies: his enemies maintained that his motive was dictated by a belief that he would be able to " manage " the king through " the Walmoden." So Caroline did as she was asked, and rooms were prepared in the palace for the new mistress's accommodation.

Caroline was not destined to meet the woman whom her husband had ordered her to love " for she loves me: " early in 1737 the queen learnt that she suffered from an incurable complaint. Her fortitude during her illness won universal praise; and the tragedy of her life was completed when only three months before her death she was publicly insulted by her eldest son. When George returned from Hanover in January 1737 he learnt that his son's friends were planning to raise the vexed question of his allowance in parliament. Walpole urged the king to make the prince an increased allowance, and as a result of his mediation a reconciliation was effected between father and son. But George was in no hurry to honour his promises, and in February the prince's friends moved an address in the Lords that the king might be asked to settle an income of £100,000 a year on his son. Walpole strained every nerve to prevent an opposition victory, and his success merely increased the prince's hostility towards him. George and Caroline were furiously angry that the prince should have allowed the family's dirty linen to be washed in public; and had they not been restrained by Walpole they would have ejected him there and then from his apartments in the royal palace. Father and mother refused to speak to him; and the bad feeling was intensified by the king's persistent refusal to make a settlement on the princess. The country stood aghast when the tale went round how the prince had removed his young wife from Hampton Court to St James's Palace when she was taken in labour of her first child; and the gossips' tongues wagged furiously when they learnt that the king had ordered his son to quit his apartments in the palace and informed the foreign ambassadors in London that courtesy calls upon the prince would be disapproved by the

government. The prince went first to Norfolk House and then to Leicester House; and gathered about him Walpole's bitterest political enemies—the "Patriots," chief of whom were Carteret, Chesterfield, Cobham, and Wyndham. A Hanoverian prince, not a Stuart "Pretender," was now the idol of the opposition.

Caroline died on 20th November 1737: she would not see her son. George fussed about her as she lay dying, showing a tenderness towards her which she had probably never known before; and in his pompous way bullying her to the end. She urged him to marry again. "Non, j'aurai des maîtresses," was his tearful reply. Then like a flash her old cynicism returned to the dying woman, and she met her husband's words with "Ah, mon Dieu! cela n'empêche pas!" Caroline's death deprived George of his ablest adviser and Walpole of his staunchest political friend.

Walpole's extraordinary luck was breaking. It will be recalled how by the terms of the Treaty of Utrecht British merchants were granted restricted trading rights in Spain's American colonies; but since 1713, with the connivance of the colonists themselves, a flourishing illicit trade had grown up; and the British merchants who controlled it had come to regard it as their indisputable right. Consequently there was a great outcry in England when the Madrid government, quite legitimately, attempted to put down this illicit trading; and wildest tales were circulated of the brutal methods employed by the Spanish revenue-men. Equally wild stories of British arrogance were current in Spain; and thus was created in both countries an atmosphere quite unconducive to a peaceful settlement of the dispute.

The opposition made the most of this popular outcry against Spain, knowing that by so doing they would embarrass the hated Walpole. A certain Captain Jenkins, who alleged that Spanish revenue-men had some years before cut off one of his ears, was paraded (with the mummified ear in a glass jar) up and down the country: he was allowed to tell his story at the bar of the House of Commons, and to give the members a sight of the famous ear. The mummified ear won many recruits for the opposition. Walpole was now confronted by a demand for war; and it was not confined to the party whose members had always steadfastly opposed him. His colleague in the ministry, Newcastle, who held the seals of the Southern Department, was inclined to support the merchants whose interests were concerned; and with his customary bellicosity George pleaded for a war against the Spaniards. But Walpole abhorred war: he hoped, despite the difficulties with which he was faced, to settle the dispute by diplomatic means. By January 1739 the basis of a settlement acceptable to both sides was reached; and for a moment even the waverer Newcastle thought in terms of an alliance with Spain. The settlement, however, ignored the one point upon which Britishers thought most deeply—the right of search exercised by the Spaniards; and when it came up for parliamentary ratification the

opposition members unmercifully flogged Walpole for his failure to insist upon its abandonment by Spain. One of the principal speakers from the opposition benches was a young man called William Pitt, who had already incurred the king's displeasure for his speech on the question of the prince's allowance. But Walpole won the day, though by a much reduced majority; and orders were sent out for the recall of the British men-o'-war which had been sent into the Mediterranean as a precautionary measure. Those orders were countermanded by Newcastle, who suspected (unjustly as it happened) that the Spaniards were trying to double-cross Great Britain by making an alliance with France; and war therefore became inevitable.

"The War of Jenkins' Ear" was an unspectacular affair. Walpole had been forced into it against his better judgment by an opposition which displayed its factiousness by moving the reduction of the army after war was declared. "They are ringing their bells," said Walpole bitterly as he listened to the merry peals which greeted the declaration of war on 19th October 1739; "they soon will be wringing their hands." Vernon captured Porto Bello: Wentworth, however, failed lamentably in his attacks on Carthagena and Santiago. But this little war was soon obscured by the much greater war which embroiled Europe.

It might be said that the fate of Europe was determined by the deaths of three important persons in 1740. On 31st May Frederick William I. of Prussia died, and left to his son a first-rate fighting machine and a political testament which hinted how best that fighting machine might be used for the advancement of Prussia. On 17th October the death of the Empress Anne of Russia put the youth Ivan VI. on the Russian throne. Three days later the Emperor Charles VI. died. The signal had been given for the Powers to make a mad scramble for the Austrian possessions which by the Pragmatic Sanction Charles had hoped to preserve for the enjoyment of his successor Maria Theresa.

Deprived of Russian support and threatened by Turkish attacks Austria was in a vulnerable position; and on 16th December 1640, without the slightest warning, the Prussian king sent his troops into the Austrian province of Silesia. It was "an ugly business," as the Westphalian Osterman observed; for Prussia was one of the many European states which had guaranteed the Pragmatic Sanction. By the victory at Mollwitz (April 1741) Frederick was confirmed in his possession of Lower Silesia. Once again Walpole hoped to localise the war, and British agents at Vienna urged Maria Theresa to come to terms with the Prussians, even though it meant confirming them in their recent conquests.

The situation was complicated by the question of the imperial succession. Maria Theresa as a woman was barred from the imperial dignity, but her husband Francis of Lorraine was eligible for election, and his claims were hotly canvassed.

But the Elector Charles of Bavaria, one of the few European rulers who had not pledged himself to see that Maria Theresa enjoyed quiet possession of her father's possessions, contested both the archduchess's succession to the Austrian possession and also Francis' claim to the imperial dignity; and behind him stood France and Spain. With the British public Maria Theresa's cause was intensely popular: a good understanding with Austria had for long enough been one of the planks in the Whig platform. George himself, actuated by the traditional Hanoverian mistrust of Prussia and eager to appear in the rôle of champion of a much-wronged, defenceless woman, would not have hesitated for a moment to engage both Great Britain and Hanover on the Austrian side; but Walpole was still powerful enough to urge caution upon his royal master; and it was on his advice that George in April 1741 offered to mediate between the Austrian archduchess and the Prussian king. The moment was propitious. Frederick had let it be known that he would support Austria against France, and cast his vote in Francis' favour at the imperial election if Maria Theresa would consent to his retention of Silesia; but that was precisely what she was not prepared to do; and while the Austrian ministers played for time Frederick lost patience and concluded an alliance with France, whereby the French recognised his conquest of Silesia on the understanding that he would support the imperial claims of Charles of Bavaria.

George himself thereupon determined to try his hand at unravelling the tangled skein of Austro-Prussian relations, and contrary to Walpole's wishes went to Hanover in the summer of 1741 to be on the spot. The first of his diplomatic efforts was a treaty with Maria Theresa promising payment of a quarterly subsidy to Austria; and his pro-Austrian sympathies were duly emphasised when he collected an army for the defence of Hanover against Prussia. The movement of French troops over the Rhine, ostensibly to support Charles of Bavaria's imperial candidature, frightened George out of his wits; and fearing that Hanover would be subjected to a twofold attack he quickly signed a treaty with France, pledging the electorate to neutrality and promising his personal support of the Bavarian claimant. His British subjects were heartily disgusted at his surrender to the hated French: it was another proof that Hanover's interests took precedence over those of Great Britain.

Walpole's attempt to reconcile Maria Theresa and Frederick failed, and Charles of Bavaria was elected emperor (January 1742). Early in February, having lost the confidence of the Commons, Walpole resigned, and few people were sorry to see him lay down the burdens of government. George certainly was grieved at having to part company with one who had served him so well; but he was nevertheless delighted at the prospect of having ministers who thought of the European situation as he did. In political circles the chief fear was that the "premiership" of Walpole would be repeated; and it was to

meet that fear that the insignificant Wilmington (Compton of old) was nominally placed at the head of the ministry. The most dominant personality in the reconstructed ministry was Carteret, the Secretary for the Northern Department. He adhered to the traditional diplomacy of the Whigs—intense hatred of France and friendship for Austria; and from the outset he worked to secure Prussia's withdrawal from the struggle so that the real trial of strength between Great Britain and France should not be embarrassed by Frederick's Francophile sympathies. Thus he compelled Maria Theresa to come to terms with the Prussian king, and to allow him to retain Silesia on condition that he threw over the French (Treaty of Berlin, July 1742). This was followed by a defensive alliance with Prussia (November), an offer of mediation between Maria Theresa and Charles of Bavaria, the promise of Dutch co-operation, and a defensive alliance with Russia; and as far as Carteret was concerned the stage was now set for the attempt to secure France's withdrawal from her policy of interference in German affairs.

Had these diplomatic successes been followed up by resolute military action Carteret's plan might have become a brilliant success. But the allied army remained inactive in Germany, and by the time George assumed command (June 1743) the French were ready for any military emergency. George was inordinately proud of his exploits at Dettingen on 19th June. His horse bolted, and he had to fight at the head of the infantry. He displayed the most reckless courage, and exposed himself to danger time and again. A thrill of pride ran through Great Britain when it was related how he had put himself at the head of the British infantry, and sword in hand had encouraged them with the words—"Now, boys, now for the honour of England; fire, and behave bravely, and the French will soon run." But the victory, in commemoration of which Handel composed a *Te Deum* and dedicated it to the king, and about which George in later life so frequently boasted, was due rather to the blunder of de Noailles' subordinate de Grammont than to the superiority of royal tactics and strategy. To the end of his life he treasured the uniform he had worn during the battle, and loved appearing in it at court or when reviewing his troops; and when the Seven Years War broke out he displayed all the irritating military omniscience of the "old general" who has no use for the tactics of the men on the spot.

Nevertheless Dettingen made diplomatic action possible. George and Carteret drafted terms at Hanau, which, had they been accepted, would have detached Bavaria from France; but the council of regency in London refused to ratify them, and fruits of victory remained ungathered. The most king and minister could do, therefore, was to sign an offensive and defensive alliance with Maria Theresa, and promise to pay the Sardinian king a large subsidy and to keep a powerful British fleet in the Mediterranean for his protection. In March 1744

JAMES II 1633–1701

II

2) Mary of Modena

~ James Edward
(Old Pretender)
1688 – 1766

II

Maria Clementina Sobieski

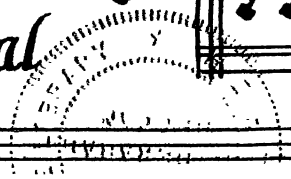
~ Charles Edward (Young Pretender)
1720 – 1788

II

Louisa von Stolberg

~ Henry Cardinal

THE PRETENDERS



France formally declared war on Great Britain.[1] The next month saw a renewal of the Franco-Prussian alliance; in May Frederick seized Frisia; and in August invaded Bohemia, taking Prague on 16th September. The new turn of events provoked a ministerial crisis in England. Carteret's colleagues in the ministry were determined to get rid of him; and very reluctantly George agreed to his dismissal (November).

Everyone was insistent that the new ministry should be "put on a broad bottom," by which it was hoped that members of all parties might be induced to rally to the service of their country; but Newcastle, whose brother Henry Pelham was nominally head of the ministry, saw to it that his party connections predominated; and the main point in ministerial policy was not a relentless prosecution of the war, but peace at the earliest moment. But peace was not so easily to be had; and 1745 was to be a black year for the British people. The French court had already conceived the idea of weakening the British position on the Continent by supporting a Jacobite rebellion in the island kingdom; and the moment for putting this plan into operation came when a British and Hanoverian force under George's second son Cumberland was defeated in the bloody battle of Fontenoy (11th May). In July the gallant young prince whom the Whigs preferred to know as "the Young Pretender," and the Jacobites as "Charles III." landed at Moidart in Scotland; in the following month the standard of revolt against the Hanoverians was raised at Glenfinnan; and Jacobite agents were scouring the Highlands to enlist men in the rebel army. A loyalist force under Cope was hurried into the disaffected districts; but Charles Edward managed to elude it; and by the middle of September he was in control of the city of Edinburgh. Cope moved his men back to Edinburgh by sea from Aberdeen; but he was surprised by the Jacobites at Prestonpans; and his regulars crumpled up before the mad charge of Charles Edward's Highlanders (20th September).

The rebel victory had a great moral effect in Scotland, and the government in London were constrained to send for Cumberland and his men to come to the rescue. Charles Edward hurled his army into England by the west coast route, and by 4th December was at Derby, having given Cumberland the slip in the neighbourhood of Newcastle-under-Lyme. Two days later the news reached the capital, and Londoners experienced all the depression of that never-to-be-forgotten "Black Friday," when consternation reigned everywhere and the servants of the royal household were busily packing their bags ready to flee with their master to Hanover. But calm returned when it was learnt that Charles Edward and his men were marching back to Scotland; and the government at once laid plans for crushing the rebellion. Cumberland was placed in command in Scotland; and on 16th April 1746 he overwhelmed the Jacobite

[1] Fighting took place before a formal declaration of war was made.

army at Culloden. His victory was marred by the senseless cruelties which bestowed upon him the unsavoury title of " the Butcher ; " and the memory of his bloody exploits during the pacification of the country did much to keep alive the clansmen's affection for the Stuarts.

Before the Jacobite danger was removed, George had been worsted in a trial of strength with the Pelhams. They had begged to be allowed to bring Pitt into the ministry, but George would not hear of it ; and consequently the Pelhams resigned (10th February). Bath and Granville (Carteret) failed to form a ministry, and in high dudgeon poor George, protesting that he was not allowed to have a mind of his own, was driven to call back " the old gang," and Pitt with them as Paymaster of the Forces. The war still dragged on. Frederick withdrew from it when in December 1745, by the Treaty of Dresden, Maria Theresa again confirmed him in his Silesian conquests ; but the British and Hanoverian armies in the Low Countries failed to make any headway against the French, and the British public were beginning to ask themselves and the politicians whether the expenditure of men and money was justified. French victories at Raucoux (October 1746) and Lauffeld (July 1747) made them masters of the Austrian Netherlands, and proved the complete ineffectiveness of the " barrier " which had been so dear to earlier pro-Dutch politicians in England ; and the French capture of Madras (September 1746) struck a dangerous blow at the British East Indian trade.

France was heartily tired of the war. She had suffered badly at sea at the hands of British Fleets, and she feared isolation on land. Overtures for peace were therefore made early in 1748, and British and French statesmen drew up the preliminaries without bothering to consult their respective allies. These were put into treaty form, and agreed upon at Aix-la-Chapelle in October and November. All parties undertook to accept the Pragmatic Sanction, except that Prussia was allowed to retain Silesia, and Elizabeth Farnese's second son Don Philip secured Parma and Piacenza ; Louis XV. made a formal recognition of the Hanoverian Succession and promised to withdraw support from the Jacobites ; Francis' claim to the imperial title was acknowledged. Otherwise the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle confirmed the *status quo ante bellum* : it was concluded merely because of the exhaustion of the belligerents, and not in the belief that it would be a final settlement of outstanding European questions.

" The Broad Bottom Administration " remained in power until Henry Pelham's death in 1754. There were the usual petty quarrels among the ministers, and Newcastle elbowed out some of his more tiresome rivals ; but in the main Henry Pelham kept his team together with some semblance of loyalty, and this enabled him to carry through some useful financial reforms. He was not of Walpole's calibre as a financier, but he was a " safe " man in the sense that he took a sound view of public finance ; and by 1751 he had not only reduced

his country's financial obligations but had compelled her creditors to accept a lower rate of interest (3½ per cent. to 1757 and 3 per cent. thereafter). The result was that Great Britain's credit was on a sounder basis than that of any other European country. The year 1752 saw the introduction of the Gregorian Calendar: this useful reform, sponsored by Chesterfield and Macclesfield, had received parliamentary approval in the previous year. Naturally the ordinary people were somewhat perturbed when they found that in order to correct the error caused by the former Julian system of reckoning they must date the day following 2nd September, 14th September; and here and there were angry demands of "give us back our eleven days." In 1753 Lord Chancellor Hardwicke carried through his famous Marriage Act, which put an end to the scandal of irregular marriages and the frauds perpetrated by the infamous "Fleet parsons;" and in the same year Henry Pelham himself sponsored the founding of the British Museum.

George was perfectly content to allow Henry Pelham to carry on the work of government as he thought fit; and the minister's death was a great blow to the king. "Now I shall have no more peace," he said, when he learnt that Pelham was dead: his words were indeed prophetic. He allowed the ministers to select the new leader, and Newcastle, one of the most successful of the eighteenth-century "party managers," quickly manœuvred himself into his dead brother's place. There were two points on which Newcastle had made up his mind: first, none of his colleagues must be left in a position to outshine him in the political firmament; and, second, he alone must have the ear of the king. Thus at the outset he arranged that neither Henry Fox nor Pitt should have places of any political importance; and he made the fatal mistake of preferring to them as the government leader in the Commons a man of second-rate ability, Thomas Robinson (later Baron Grantham). Newcastle's ministry was therefore a "patchwork" affair: it was quite unable to meet the emergency of a war, the distant thunders of which could be heard in North America and India.

George was one of the few men clearly to foresee the imminence of war. During a visit to Hanover in the summer and autumn of 1755 he negotiated an agreement for the supply of Hessians "ready to march at two months' notice," and renewed the 1742 alliance with Russia; but his action was hotly criticised at home, and the most formidable of the opponents of the Hessian agreement was Pitt. George thought that Pitt's criticisms were actuated by his old hostility to the Hanoverian connection; and the result was that Newcastle dismissed him. Chiefly through Fox's skilful "management" of the Commons the two measures were finally approved by parliament.

Pitt's hostility went far beyond any dislike of the Hanoverian connection: it was a protest against Newcastle's old-womanish methods of conducting the nation's affairs on the eve of a deadly struggle for empire. Pitt knew that "the

incidents" reported from North America and India, where the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was conveniently ignored by British and French colonists, were the beginnings of that struggle; and to him the defence of George's Hanoverian possessions loomed into insignificance before the grand vision of a far-flung empire. Braddock's defeat in the forests of the Alleghany country was a warning which could not pass unheeded (1755): Paris had immediately sent out reinforcements; but Newcastle and his friends still hesitated what course of action to take, and when they did make up their minds to send Boscawen to North America they had committed themselves to a breach with France for which they were ill-prepared. It was the hope of the Newcastle ministry that they would be again able to pit Habsburg against Bourbon on the Continent, and by means of lavish subsidies to hold France in check.

The imperial rivalry of France and Great Britain was not lost upon Frederick of Prussia. He perceived that in the end it would be fought out in Europe: he knew that in that fight Prussia would be involved. There were clear indications that London and Vienna were slowly losing that intimate touch which was the mainspring of Whig foreign policy; and he suspected that it was the prelude to an Austrian plan of "encirclement" of Prussia with a view to securing the return of Silesia. Both in Austria and Great Britain there was a feeling that the Austro-British alliance was wearing thin. The British public looked upon the Austrians as selfish and apathetic, except where their own interests were concerned: the Austrian public felt a natural resentment at the British indifference to the fate of Silesia. The Austrian minister Kaunitz conceived the plan of smashing the Franco-Prussian alliance: then Austria would pounce down upon "the robber state," humiliate Frederick, and force him to return Silesia.

Frederick realised that there was no time to lose; and when British statesmen invited him to assent to a convention which would neutralise Germany, excluding the Austrian Netherlands, in the event of a Franco-British war, he immediately agreed. This Convention of Westminster of 16th January 1756 secured the defence of Hanover (and for this reason Pitt was loud in his condemnation of it) for Great Britain and of Silesia for Prussia; and it was the first stage in the great diplomatic revolution which in 1756 resulted in a complete readjustment of foreign policy in four great European states. In May came the next stage—the Treaty of Versailles, by which Austria and France, enemies for more than two centuries, came to terms. Austria pledged herself to remain neutral in a war between France and Great Britain, but both Austria and France promised to come to each other's assistance if attacked by an ally of Great Britain; but while France was thus to assist Austria in the event of an attack by Prussia, it was specially laid down that Austria was not to fight against Great Britain. On 16th May Great Britain declared war on France: three months later

Frederick, resolved to anticipate any move by his enemies, marched his men into Saxony. The Seven Years War had begun.

George was delighted at the thought of being able again to show the world what a great soldier he was ; but before the war was many months old he was faced by a ministerial crisis, precipitated by Byng's failure to hold Minorca and Fox's retirement ; and the alternative to Newcastle was " the odious Mr. Pitt " who said such unpleasant things about Hanover and Hanoverians. " Pitt will not do my business," the king protested to Granville ; and as Granville explained to a friend, " my business " meant—Hanover. The country was in no mood for a display of royal obstinacy : the country clamoured for leadership. George, therefore, gave way ; and refusing to serve with Newcastle or Fox, Pitt entered a ministry headed by Devonshire as Secretary of State for the Southern Department.

The new ministry was soon in troubled waters. George made no attempt to hide his dislike of Pitt and his friends : he complained that the new secretary of State gave him long lectures which he could not understand, while his brother-in-law Temple, who had gone to the Admiralty, ignored or snubbed him ; and he did everything to obstruct them. Newcastle out of office was disturbed at the measure of Tory support which Pitt received : he saw in it a danger to the Whigs. Devonshire found his fellow Secretary of State a difficult colleague to get on with : he was apt to resort to unorthodox measures ; and he shared the King's dislike of the Militia Bill which proposed a national militia. Matters came to a head when Pitt refused to agree to a proposal that Cumberland should be sent to defend Hanover against the French, and that £100,000 should be voted for that purpose. In a huff Cumberland declared that he would not serve as long as Pitt was in the government (March 1757) ; and George was eventually persuaded to dismiss the " cantankerous brothers-in-law." From 6th April to 19th June the country was without a ministry. George found that it was one thing to dismiss Pitt, but another to find a politician to take his place ; and in his ears rang the popular shouts for Pitt. Finally, Newcastle and Pitt came to an arrangement whereby the latter was to be left free to direct the war policy while the former controlled patronage ; and George was compelled to accept the coalition.

Pitt was to reap the harvest so carefully sown by Walpole and Pelham. Great Britain's credit was good : she was therefore cast in the rôle of the pay-master of the armies operating against the French ; and, following the policy which he had once condemned, Pitt poured out subsidies with a lavish hand. It was some little time before the effect of " the Pitt organisation " could be felt. Frederick more than held his own against the Austrians in 1757 ; but, much to George's disgust, his son Cumberland agreed to the French occupation of Hanover after having been roundly defeated at Hastenbeck. When the

unfortunate son returned to pay his respects to his father, he was greeted with a "Here is my son, who has ruined me and disgraced himself." In Canada Montcalm consolidated the French position; but in India Clive's great victory at Plassey gave the East India Company undisputed possession of Bengal. The year 1758 was an even better one from the British point of view. An Anglo-Hanoverian army under the command of Ferdinand of Brunswick defeated the French at Crefeld, and forced them back across the Rhine; and in North America Louisburg and Fort Duquesne were captured. But it was in the following year that the country was treated to the first solid results of Pitt's work as an "organiser of victory." Wolfe, the young soldier whom he selected for the important task of ousting the French from Canada, more than justified his confidence when, on the Plains of Abraham, he defeated Montcalm and secured Quebec. Boscawen's victory off Lagos and Hawke's at Quiberon Bay dealt French sea-power shattering blows; and at Minden Ferdinand of Brunswick again inflicted a sharp reverse on the French land forces. In India the French were "on the run;" and thanks to the gold poured into the Prussian war-chest, Frederick was able to hold in check the Austrians and their Russian allies. "We are forced to ask every morning," wrote Horace Walpole to a friend, "what victory there has been for fear of missing one."

Pitt never for a moment lost sight of the British objective in the war: it was to win for the British crown Canada and India; and until that objective was reached he would strain every nerve to keep Frederick of Prussia in the field against the Austrians and Russians, and to reinforce the British-Hanoverian army operating under Ferdinand of Brunswick against the French land forces. Frederick had been badly hammered, and was in dire straits for money and men. Pitt supplied the money. Ferdinand of Brunswick was faced by a French force at least twice as large as that which he commanded. Pitt sent out reinforcements to him. He knew only too well that the struggle for empire would be decided in Germany. Frederick experienced a trying time in 1760. Defeated at Landshut (June), he was compelled to leave the control of the road into Silesia in Austrian hands; and for the retention of Silesia he meant to fight to the bitter end. Luck was against him: in October he saw his enemies momentarily established in his capital. But in the bloody fight at Torgau (November)—the last great battle in the war—he redeemed the dishonour which his country had suffered by a brilliant victory over the Austrians. For Great Britain the crowning glory of that year of war was the capture of Montreal by Amherst: French domination in Canada was virtually at an end.

George was heart and soul in the war. Nothing gave him greater joy than to review his troops, and to speak words of encouragement to the drafts proceeding to one or other of the theatres of war: nothing bored his attendants more than his long dissertations on military science and criticisms

Thomas Hudson.

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GEORGE II.

of the generals. But a sudden end was put to it all: on 25th October 1760 George dropped dead in his apartment. His body was buried with great pomp on 11th November in the same grave in Henry VII.'s Chapel at Westminster as lay that of his queen; and he had given strict instructions that the sides of the two coffins were to be removed, so that their dust might mingle together.

CHAPTER III

"FARMER GEORGE"

George III.: 1760–1820

THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE rejoicing throughout the country when George III. was proclaimed king in succession to his grandfather George II. It is true that his accession coincided with one of the most glamorous phases of "Mr Pitt's German War;" but what gave such universal satisfaction was the knowledge that the new king had been born and educated in England; and it was widely reported that he had none of those pro-German sympathies which more than anything else were the cause of his ancestors' unpopularity with the people of Great Britain. There was no longer a Jacobite problem. The Young Pretender had now entered into that tragic period of his life which saw the transformation of a charming young man into a drunken debauchee; and the attractive qualities of the young King George, emphasised by the fact that he was said to have Tory inclinations, made it possible for Jacobites to change their allegiance without being harassed by the thoughts of the inconsistency of their behaviour.

George III. was born at Norfolk House in St James's Square on 4th June 1738. He was the eldest son of Frederick Prince of Wales by his wife Augusta of Saxe-Gotha. The birth was premature by some weeks; and so puny and ill-natured was the baby that few in attendance at the accouchement believed that he would survive for many days. Dr Secker, then Bishop of Oxford and rector of St James's parish, was hastily summoned; and the future king was privately christened within a few hours of birth. It was a sturdy countrywoman, the wife of one of the Norfolk House gardeners, who saved the sickly baby's life; and it has been suggested that it was at her breasts that he acquired by some mysterious means that intense love of the English countryside and keen interest in the pursuits of countrymen which caused his detractors in later life to bestow upon their king the nickname of "Farmer George."

Frederick Prince of Wales was a worthless though attractive young man; and, as has already been seen, he was true to the Hanoverian tradition of being on the worst possible terms with his father, George II. But he was genuinely solicitous about the welfare of his children; and he personally tried to secure the best possible education for them. When George was seven he was placed in the care of Dr Ayscough who was later to become Dean of Bristol. The

preceptor was not a great scholar, and he was ill-suited temperamentally for the education of a sensitive child. George's mother was greatly concerned when she discovered that her eldest son loathed his lessons with "the Doctor." A more satisfactory educational arrangement was made in 1750 when Francis Lord North was appointed "the governor" of the two eldest boys; and although Ayscough's services were not entirely dispensed with the greater part of the instruction was given by George Scot, a mathematician of great distinction and a friend of the brilliant but hopelessly dissipated Bolingbroke.

On his father's sudden death in March 1751 George became a person of importance; and within a month, after he had been duly invested with the principality of Wales, he obtained "a household," which of course meant that he was drawn into the vortex of party politics in the sense that the appointments to his household would be controlled by the ministers of the crown. North was dismissed, and his place went to Simon Lord Harcourt, who was described as "a civil sheepish peer," and who thought that his duty was well and truly done when he taught the prince to walk with his toes turned out at the proper angle. The sub-governor was Andrew Stone, "a man of grave deportment, of good temper, and of the most consummate prudence and discretion." Dr Hayter, Bishop of Norwich, was made preceptor; and Scot was retained as sub-preceptor.

George's mother, the Dowager Princess, was convinced that Harcourt and Hayter did not have her son's best interests at heart: on the other hand, she thought highly of Stone and Scot; and when they quarrelled with their superiors in the royal schoolroom the mother sided with them against Harcourt and Hayter. This is not the place to give a detailed account of that quarrel; but the real cause of the trouble was the suspicion that Stone and Scot, both of whom were thought to be tinged with Jacobitism, worked sedulously to undermine the Whig interest with the young prince; and for this reason Harcourt and Hayter were determined to get rid of the two men. They failed to carry their point with George II. and his ministers, and the result was a reshuffling of the household. The new governor was James Earl Waldegrave; the new preceptor, Dr Thomas, Bishop of Peterborough. Years later George himself described the former as "a depraved and worthless man." Thomas, however, was a mild-mannered, scholarly man, genuinely fond of children; and the prince was very attached to, and learnt a great deal from, him.

Those who had the interests of the young prince at heart could not fail to be troubled by the Dowager Princess's adoration of her son. That she was a remarkable woman must be admitted: she was a good mother, and her chief concern was that her children should be well brought up. But like so many adoring mothers she feared to allow her children to take the normal risks of life; and when she was advised that it was time that her eldest boy should

" begin to learn the usages and knowledge of the world " she would always retaliate with the reply that such was impossible, because, to quote her actual words on one occasion when this subject was under discussion, " the young people of quality are so ill-educated, and so very vicious that they frighten me." At the same time she knew that her refusal to allow George and his brothers to mix with the sons of the great lords was wrong ; but the obsession of a wicked world made it impossible for her to do the right thing ; and the result was that her children, and George in particular, were unnaturally attached to their mother's apron-strings. Waldegrave related how on taking up his duties he " found His Royal Highness uncommonly full of princely prejudices contracted in the nursery, and improved by bedchamber women and pages of the back-stairs ; " and actually the mother's influence over the prince was strengthened by his friendship with John Stuart, Earl of Bute, who had been one of his father's friends.

Scandalmongers lost no time in proclaiming that the Dowager Princess and Bute were lovers. It is difficult to know the exact nature of their association ; and in the absence of evidence it is charitable to regard it merely as a platonic friendship. Horace Walpole looked upon Bute as " a man of taste ; " but as a Tory and a Scot he could not expect to escape the scurrilous wrath of the great Whig lords who since George I.'s accession had come to look upon the control of government as an inalienable right. Bute, as it happened, was as loyally attached to the Revolution Settlement as the Whigs themselves, but he could not accept the claim that it postulated a Whig domination ; and there is little doubt that he instilled this view into the young prince's mind, introducing him to Bolingbroke's *Patriot King*, and Blackstone's *Commentaries*.[1] Paradox though it is, it was Bute who cut the mother's apron-strings ; and from him George learnt that conception of kingship which developed in him a fiercely independent turn of mind, and brought him into violent conflict with the Whigs during his long reign.

George II. had nothing in common with his grandson. In 1755 the king sent for the young prince " to find out the extent of his political knowledge, to sift him in relation to Hanover, and to caution him against evil counsellors." The interview was a fiasco, for " the prince was flustered and sulky ; " and his grandfather, always inclined to be testy when brought back from his beloved electorate on state business, had only recently returned from Hanover. Waldegrave soon gave up trying to mould the character of his charge ; but he was nevertheless of the opinion that the king ought to discuss the prince's future with the Dowager Princess ; and would have compelled her to comply with the royal wishes " by whispering in her ear that which would make her tremble in spite of her spotless innocence "—an allusion to the suspected

[1] *The Commentaries*, not yet published, were read by George in manuscript.

intrigue with Bute. The king thought that it might be possible to break the mother's influence by marrying George to one of the Brunswick-Wolfenbuttel princesses, whose plumpness appealed to the royal taste. The Dowager Princess was nearly frantic with grief when she learnt of this proposal. She made all sorts of excuses for preventing her son's marriage: that for "a shy and backward boy" the very thought of marriage was "premature;" that the princesses' mother was "the most intriguing, meddling, and also the most satirical, sarcastical person in the world, and will always make mischief wherever she comes;" that marriage would "hurt" the prince "in his publick and make him uneasy in his private situation." The king's scheme came to nothing. All about the prince "most cruelly misrepresented" the young ladies, and their "perfections were aggravated into faults." Horace Walpole was therefore able to inform a friend that "her ladyship's boy declares violently against being *bewulfenbuttled*—a word which I do not pretent to understand as it is not in Mr Johnson's new dictionary."

On 4th June 1756 George was formally declared of age. At that time, so Scot told a friend, the prince was "a lad of very good principles. Good natured, and extremely honest; has no heroic strain but loves peace, and has no turn for extravagance; modest and has no tendency for vice, and has as yet very virtuous principles; has the greatest temptation to gallant with the ladies, who lay themselves out in the most shameful manner to draw him in, but to no purpose."

George II. used the occasion to make another attempt to wean the prince from his mother. Waldegrave was commanded to inform him that for the future he would receive from his grandfather's civil list £40,000 a year for the expenses of his household; but at the same time he would be required to occupy apartments in the royal palaces at St James's or Kensington; and these were to be prepared against the time he came into residence. Once again the mother's influence was too much for the king. The young prince thanked his grandfather for the promised allowance, but he regretted that he could not comply with the royal wishes as to residence, because he could not bear to be parted from his mother, and he sincerely hoped the king would not press the matter any further. This was more than George II.'s temper could stand. If the prince would not obey him as to his future residence then he would withhold the promised allowance. His ministers, however, intervened. They were on the horns of a dilemma: to offend the prince would jeopardise their positions when he ascended the throne. So, as Chesterfield observed, "the princess dowager and Lord Bute agreed to keep the prince to themselves."

On his accession George III. was politically an unknown quantity. But his subjects soon learnt that despite the tales which were told about his educational imperfections he was a man with a mind of his own, and a monarch

with a well-defined conception of his prerogatives. At some pains Pitt prepared a speech for the king's use at his first council meeting; but to his utter amazement he was politely informed by George that he "had previously viewed the subject with some attention, and had himself already prepared the heads of what he would say at the council table." It was generally agreed that he acquitted himself remarkably well on this occasion. His speech was short, to the point, and delightfully spoken;[1] and it echoed ominously in the ears of his Whig ministers.

> The loss that I and the nation have sustained by the death of the king, my grandfather, would have been severely felt at any time; but coming at so critical a juncture, and so unexpected, it is by many circumstances augmented, and the weight now falling on me now much increased: I feel my own insufficiency to support it as I wish; but, animated by the tenderest affection for my native country, and by depending upon the advice, experience, and abilities of your lordships; on the support of every honest man; I enter with cheerfulness into this arduous situation, and shall make it the business of my life to promote, in everything, the glory and happiness of these kingdoms, to preserve and strengthen the constitution in both church and state; and, as I mount the throne in the midst of an expensive but just and necessary war, I shall endeavour to prosecute it in a manner the most likely to bring on an honourable and lasting peace.

The phrasing was traditional, but the emphasis on English birth and the refusal to narrow the support of the crown to the great Whig lords was a novelty which was highly distasteful to the assembled ministers; and Pitt left the council meeting greatly distressed, for he had misheard part of the speech and thought that the king had used the term "a bloody war." The war was "Mr Pitt's German War:" his one ambition was to make the peace "Mr Pitt's glorious peace."

George met his first parliament in November 1760; and for the second time he caused his Whig ministers to shift uneasily in their seats. The speech from the throne, originally drafted by Hardwicke, had been tampered with; and again emphasis was laid on the king's English birth and his desire to do his best for his subjects irrespective of their political labels. What caused the greatest concern was the following interpolation in George's own handwriting: "Born and educated in this country I glory in the name of Britain; and the peculiar happiness of my life will ever consist in promoting the welfare of a people, whose loyalty and warm affection to me I consider the greatest and most permanent security to my throne." Pitt, however, was somewhat reassured when he heard from the lips of his sovereign that the war was to be relentlessly pursued until "a safe and honourable peace" could be obtained.

One of George's first thoughts was the perpetuation of his line. For a

[1] Frederick Prince of Wales had employed Quin the actor to teach his children elocution.

moment he contemplated making one of his subjects, Lady Sarah Lennox, his queen; but his mother and Bute resolutely opposed the match; and the lady herself was half-hearted in her response to the king's clumsy wooing. An emissary was sent to Germany to see what the princely houses of that country could provide in the way of a suitable wife for Great Britain's king. The choice eventually fell upon Charlotte, the sister of the Duke of Mecklenberg-Strelitz; and in September 1761 she was married in the Chapel Royal to George by Dr Secker, now Archbishop of Canterbury. The coronation followed some days later and there was great rejoicing throughout the country. Many were particularly touched by George's humility during the coronation service, especially by his removal of his crown when about to receive the sacrament; and even Horace Walpole, who pretended to be rather bored by such displays of enthusiasm, was amazed at the outburst of popular delight in London's streets, where fabulous sums were paid for seats along the route taken by the king and queen.

Charlotte was not "a beauty;" but her husband's subjects were struck by the fact that she looked "sensible," and was "very genteel" in her behaviour. For a full month after the coronation George took the greatest pleasure in "showing her off" to his subjects. He escorted her to the Play and the Opera; and incidentally the first operatic performance which she attended in England was Gay's brilliant *Beggars' Opera*, then the rage of London, though in George II.'s reign it would have been generally considered a rather treasonable production. There were receptions at the palace; musical evenings, for Charlotte was extremely fond of music and played well; and "very select" balls. But both George and his queen lacked the capacity to become leaders of society. The court entertainments were stiff and formal, and "the quality" poked fun at the thrifty arrangements made for their amusement. The Dowager Princess from the start disapproved of "the goings-on" at court: she maintained that such frivolity, harmless though it was compared to the splendid entertainments given in the homes of the great, set a bad example to the nation; and she refused to allow her younger sons to attend them. George and Charlotte, therefore, soon gave up the thankless task of trying to be social leaders, and found solace in their own company. From Charlotte's point of view this blissful domesticity was a grave misfortune. She was thus prevented from ever knowing intimately her husband's subjects; and the result was that at no time during her long sojourn in England did she take a prominent part in the social life of the capital.

GEORGE'S FIRST CLASH with Whiggery arose over the question of "Mr Pitt's German War." The victories which the Whig politicians claimed as the outcome of their political sagacity might arouse mob enthusiasm when explained by

Pitt in the higher flights of oratory; but they were lost upon the Tory landowners upon whose shoulders fell the great burden of taxation; and the knowledge that the war was being fought in the interests of the Whigs' mercantile friends only inflamed the Tory hostility against a continuance of the struggle. The Tories, therefore, formed the peace party. They urged that the time was ripe for negotiations; and were unmoved by Pitt's protests that a too-hasty desire for peace would rob the country of the rich fruits of victory.

On this question of peace and war the ministry itself was divided. Pitt was a difficult man to work with: he not only wanted, but invariably had, his own way; and as "an organiser of victory" he refused to impair efficiency by clinging to the claims of patronage. Both Newcastle and Bedford were secretly opposed to him. The former resented his colleague's domineering manner, and was jealous of his immense influence in the country: the latter was "huffed" because one of his friends had not received the command of the British forces in Germany. Henry Fox, a born political opportunist, coveted Newcastle's place; and intrigued to worm his way into it.

The ministry was shaken to its foundations when Bute was appointed Secretary of State in 1761. It was easy then, as it has been since, to blame George for this appointment; but it should be remembered that had the Whig ministers only displayed an elementary loyalty to each other Bute's insinuation into the ministry could never have been effected; and the truth was that the move was welcomed, and perhaps even suggested, by Newcastle with the object of weakening Pitt's position. Bute was a recruit for the peace party within the ministry; and early in October the country was staggered by the news that Pitt had resigned. It was suggested that such a national calamity ought to be marked by a "general mourning:" it was inevitable that Bute and the Dowager Princess should be blamed for the idol's overthrow. George himself was made unpleasantly aware of the popular disapproval. On appearing in the streets he was greeted with shouts of abuse, and jackboots and petticoats [1] were paraded in his sight.

There was a momentary lull in this political battle when it was discovered that Pitt on resignation had accepted a peerage for his wife and a pension of £3000 a year for three lives. The idol had feet of clay; he had sacrificed his principles for "a bauble" and money. But Pitt was quickly rehabilitated in the popular esteem when someone hit upon the idea of presenting him to the public as an object of pity rather than blame. He had fallen unsuspectingly into a trap cunningly laid by his enemies to discredit him in the eyes of his admirers! Replaced on his pedestal, therefore, the fallen statesman again received the violent sympathy of the mob; and there were ugly scenes in

[1] The jackboot was a play on Bute's name: the petticoat, of course, referred to the Dowager Princess.

January 1762 when the government declared war on Spain, the issue on which Pitt had resigned.

Newcastle went in May: his place as prime minister was taken by Bute. It was from George's standpoint a fatal move. Once again he was accused of preferring the services of a Tory and a favourite to those of a Whig politician; and Bute's appointment branded the king as a party man. Actually his intentions were the reverse: he hoped to wean the country away from party loyalties, and planned to give his people a government in which the best men served the state in a thoroughly disinterested manner. It was not Bute the favourite whom he advanced to Newcastle's place, but Bute the disinterested politician, who could be relied upon loyally to assist his king in effecting his ideal of non-party government.

Rightly or wrongly George accepted the Tory view that it was in the country's best interests that the war should be brought to an end; and upon Bute devolved the delicate task of making peace. It was a good Whig, Bedford, who undertook the negotiations of the preliminaries in Paris in the autumn of 1762: other good Whigs, notably George Grenville and Henry Fox, were as eager as the king and Bute for peace. But the problem was how to secure parliamentary sanction for the projected settlement. The Whig interests predominated in the Commons, and were more or less equally matched with Tory interests in the Lords. It was Henry Fox who supplied the solution of that problem. Bluntly he told George and Bute that only by bribery would the Whig position be carried in parliament. At first George shrank from such discreditable action; but Fox was insistent that only by the adoption of his plan would the peace be carried; and at last the king gave way, weakly justifying his concurrence to Grenville with the statement that "we must call in bad men to govern bad men."

Fox did his work well. Bribes were lavished in the form of titles or pensions; the most disgraceful intimidation was resorted to; and, when neither bribery nor intimidation could secure complacency, dismissals from public office and resumption of pensions were ordered. Fox played the war party at the game which the Whigs themselves had popularised in political life—and played that game so well that his opponents were overwhelmed by his tactics. The question of the peace came before parliament in December; and Bute in the Lords and Fox in the Commons put the government's case. But not even the impassioned opposition of Pitt, who, afflicted with one of his attacks of gout, hobbled painfully to his place in parliament, could undo Fox's work; and the peace was approved.

Outside parliament, on the other hand, the peacemakers were more hotly and dangerously assailed. Mobs, deliberately incited to violence by Whig agitators, hurled the filthiest abuse at Bute; and when his Chancellor of Exchequer thought the time opportune to introduce a tax on cider, even the

rural districts, which were regarded as Tory strongholds, turned against the government. Bute recognised that his continuance in office must involve the crown in disaster, and in April 1763 he resigned. It was characteristic of him on leaving office to write asking Bedford " to assist his young sovereign with his weight and name—that sovereign who has not a wish but what terminates in this country's happiness, and who, since he mounted the throne, has shown ever the highest regard and predilection for the Duke of Bedford." Poor Bute was not then to know that he had commended the young king to a politician who was ready to fight for that conception of government so abhorrent to George.

George Grenville succeeded Bute as Prime Minister. Though Horace Walpole could describe the new leader of the government as " a fatiguing orator and indefatigable drudge, more likely to disgust than offend," Grenville was nevertheless a sound man with a good record of public service, and if he was not a first-rate parliamentarian, he was thoroughly disinterested and had the reputation of being " a religious good man." It was said at the time that Bute was responsible for his appointment, believing that Grenville would be easily managed by the king, and would not object to Bute occupying the position of " power behind the throne." Newcastle believed that tale; but he quickly informed Pitt that he doubted whether Bute's choice would be justified by events, as the new Prime Minister was a man with a mind of his own.

It was the Grenville administration which brought John Wilkes into the political limelight. Wilkes was an opportunist: as soon as he knew that he would get nothing out of the government in the shape of public employment he determined to cast himself in the rôle of champion of popular liberties; and it was Grenville and his colleagues who made it possible for him to play that rôle before admiring audiences of his fellow-countrymen. In 1763 Wilkes and Charles Churchill founded *The North Briton*. It set a new fashion in political journalism: " the highest names, whether of statesmen or magistrates, were printed at length, and the insinuations went still higher," reported Horace Walpole to a friend. Both George and Bute must have writhed under the lash of Wilkes's and Churchill's abuse and sarcasm; but they had the good sense to ignore it; and had Grenville done the same little would probably have been heard of " Wilkes and Liberty."

Grenville was a fearless politician: he was resolved to call the bluff of *The North Briton*. His opportunity came with the publication of Number XLV. on 23rd April. In the King's speech to parliament it was claimed that the Peace of Hubertsberg, by which Prussia and France came to terms, was a satisfactory outcome of the Peace of Paris. *The North Briton* characterised that claim as " the most abandoned instance of ministerial effontery ever attempted to be imposed on mankind;" and while no direct attack was made against the king

there was a studied insolence in the statement that " every friend of his country must lament that a prince of so many great and amiable qualities, whom England truly reveres, can be brought to give the sanction of his sacred name to the most odious measures and to the most unjustifiable public declarations from a throne ever renowned for truth, honour, and unsullied virtue." Grenville did not act rashly: the number was submitted to the crown's law officers, who pronounced it to be a " most infamous and seditious libel, tending to inflame the minds and alienate the people from His Majesty, and to incite them to traitorous insurrection against the king; " and on that opinion the two Secretaries of State issued the warrant for arrest of " the authors, printers and publishers " of the offending journal and the seizure of their papers. Wilkes was arrested; Churchill managed to take refuge with friends in the country. When the former was brought before Lord Chief Justice Pratt (later Lord Camden) his counsel pleaded that " a general warrant " [1] was illegal, and that as a member of parliament Wilkes enjoyed the privilege of immunity from arrest while parliament was in session. On the latter plea the judge, therefore, ordered his release.

Grenville and his colleagues were not deterred by this defeat. A blasphemous parody of Pope's *Essay on Man* called *An Essay on Woman*, to which Wilkes had contributed obscene notes in the tradition of Bishop Warburton's notes to Pope's work, came into the government's hands. The Lords were easily persuaded to vote it " a most blasphemous, obscene and impious libel," which constituted a breach of privilege owing to the parodying of Warburton's notes; and an address was sent up to the king begging that proceedings should be instituted against Wilkes for blasphemy. In the Commons, however, Grenville's aim was to deprive Wilkes by a vote of the assembly of his immunity from arrest so that he could be brought up before the courts; and with this object in view it was moved from the government benches that Number XLV. was a seditious libel which ought to deprive Wilkes of the protection he claimed as a member of parliament. Wilkes met the government attack resolutely, though he was no debater: in particular he stressed the danger to liberty by the system of general warrants. Lively debates took place; but the scales were carefully weighed down against Wilkes; and Grenville's plan worked as it was meant to do. One of the results of the debate was that Wilkes was involved in a duel and was wounded. His friends pleaded that the question of his expulsion ought to stand over until he was recovered; but the government had no intention of showing any consideration towards so dangerous an enemy, and indeed it was suspected that he was not as ill as he made out; and when he refused to obey a formal summons to appear for sentence at the bar of the House of Commons his expulsion was voted.

[1] No individual is named in a " general warrant." There was great truth in Wilkes's observation that such a warrant as that under which he was arrested was " a ridiculous warrant against the whole English nation."

His non-appearance in court brought down upon him the sentence of outlawry; and he fled the country.

George himself had taken no public part in this quarrel with Wilkes. Nevertheless, it was a matter on which he felt most keenly: he loathed impiety and mistrusted demagogues; and his ministers never for a moment doubted his strongly worded condemnations of Wilkes in official audiences. Naturally, in a certain section of Whiggery, the blame for the attack on Wilkes was laid upon George; and his progresses in the streets were made the occasion for crowds to shout "Wilkes and Liberty." These disorders enabled George to take an accurate measure of Grenville's administration. He felt that it lacked "thrust;" that ministerial weakness bred a dangerous anarchy; that unless Grenville and his friends made more purposeful attempts to give the country strong government he would have to make other arrangements.

Grenville sensed the royal lack of confidence: his friends put it down to Bute's intrigues with the king; and he was persuaded to agree with them. George, who left a memorandum of the events of the summer of 1764, noted that the minds of the ministers "were canker'd with the most violent jealousys against" Bute; and that in consequence of this he was treated "very indecently" by those who were his chief advisers. Bedford loved to give advice: he "declar'd to me," George wrote in his memorandum, "the kingdom ruin'd if Mr Pitt did not come into office, nay even advised the giving him *carte blanche*." George, therefore, saw Pitt. But "the Great Commoner" could not forget the treatment which he had received in 1762; and he was bold enough to "lecture" the king on the peace which he considered a miserable ending to a great war. George was conciliatory: he listened to the lecture patiently and without observation; and he even told Pitt that he could invite Temple to come into the government, which was a great concession in view of Temple's part in the Wilkes affair. What the king would not agree to was Pitt's insistence that the country's interests would be best served by a return of "the great Whig lords" to office; and the interview ended with the observation: "Well, Mr Pitt, I see this will not do: my honour is concerned, and I must support it."

George lost no time in telling Grenville of the interview with Pitt. He assured the prime minister that he had nothing against him and his colleagues personally; but they had failed to give the country a strong government; and solely with the object of remedying that defect he had approached Pitt. Grenville not unnaturally refused to accept the criticism that his administration was weak. He told the king that he was gravely disturbed that the approach to Pitt had been made without his knowledge, and plainly hinted that the royal discourtesy was the outcome of Bute's influence at court. George showed Grenville written proof that Bute was not hostile to the ministry; but suspicion of the supposed

favourite was too deeply rooted to be so easily eradicated; and the prime minister insisted that it was in the public interest that Bute should be asked to leave town.

Bute went to his house at Luton; but there was no improvement in the relations of George and his ministers. In his memorandum the king shrewdly observed: "Whenever Opposition allarm'd them they were very attentive to me, but whenever releas'd from that their sole ideas were how to get the mastery of the closet." The royal patience in what was a trying situation was remarkable: not once but many times George "stifl'd" his feelings of contempt for Grenville and his colleagues; and there is no doubt that the mental strain of such an unhappy relationship was the cause of his indisposition early in 1765.

Illness brought home to the king the urgent necessity for securing the future of his little son should death place the boy on the throne during his minority; and in the spring of the year a Regency Bill was introduced into parliament. In the course of the debates on the measure the ministry tried to disqualify the Dowager Princess from a place on the proposed Council of Regency; but the opposition would not acquiesce in such an arrangement, and naturally George himself as a loyal son was furiously angry at the slight on his mother.

His uncle Cumberland came to the rescue. Since the days of the 'Forty-five this gruff, corpulent soldier had been known from one end of the island to the other as "Butcher" Cumberland; and the threat of his presence had induced many a wakeful child to seek the solace of sleep. In his coarse way he described the ministerial bickerings as a *guerre de pôts de chambre*; and he volunteered to approach Pitt in the hope that he could persuade him to form a ministry. Cumberland's scheme was a failure: Pitt would not take office without Temple, and Temple hung back. Failure was the signal for Grenville and his colleagues to increase their arrogant treatment of the king. The prime minister lectured his royal master as though he was a naughty schoolboy; and Bedford threatened that he and his clique would leave the ministry if George would not treat their friends "with cordiality and frown on whomsoever they did not like." The king confessed after Bedford's interview that had he not "broken out into a profuse perspiration my indignation would have suffocated me."

Cumberland persevered; and with Newcastle's aid he was able to persuade the Marquis of Rockingham to form a government. George was overjoyed, though he found it difficult to view the composition of the new ministry with enthusiasm; but Rockingham offered him an escape from the insufferable arrogance of Grenville and Bedford. Before taking office Rockingham asked the king to promise never to consult Bute on any political question. That promise was readily given, and, as members of the ministry subsequently declared in parliament, was faithfully kept. Unfortunately George from the outset was prejudiced against the new ministry. He said that he had "not two

men in his bedchamber of less parts than Lord Rockingham ; " and he found it difficult to subscribe to the political views of some of the prime minister's colleagues.

Luck was against the Rockingham administration. Cumberland's death soon after the change of ministers had been carried through deprived his nephew of a level-headed adviser and Rockingham of a man capable of controlling the more factious elements in the clique. But the new prime minister's most onerous burden was the unrest in the North American Colonies, the outcome of Grenville's Stamp Act of 1765. Rockingham and some of his colleagues boldly favoured the immediate repeal of the offending measure ; other ministers thought that the face of the Mother Country might be saved by modifying the measure so that the colonist could find no cause for complaint at its provisions. Outside ministerial circles opinion was more sharply divided. The Pitt Whigs clamoured for nothing less than repeal, and were solidly behind Rockingham : the Grenville Whigs, supported by a large number of the Tories, urged retention of the Act and a strict enforcement of its provisions.

George himself was in a quandary. Repeal meant a repudiation of a decision only recently arrived at in parliament. It would be interpreted on the other side of the Atlantic as an admission of weakness on the part of the authorities in London, and consequently might result in further factiousness on the part of the colonists. At the same time he was strongly opposed to enforcement by armed force ; and it seemed preferable to him that an attempt should be made to safeguard the principle which underlay Grenville's Act. Aware that many members of his own household were for retention and enforcement, he let them know that they were at liberty to vote against the government without running the risk of incurring the royal displeasure ; and this foolish move on his part at once gave rise to the suspicion in ministerial circles that he was playing a double game. Rockingham's fears were calmed when George frankly informed him that since enforcement could not be undertaken except by the employment of armed force he would readily acquiesce in the repeal of the Stamp Act.

Rockingham was cursed with a team of disloyal colleagues. It was strange behaviour for a secretary of state to stand up in the Lords to announce that the administration of which he was a member lacked " authority, dignity, and extension," and then to hint that these defects would speedily be remedied if Pitt were brought into the ministry. Yet that was what Grafton actually did ; and at the same time Lord Chancellor Northington strained every nerve to undermine his political chief's influence with the king. Not that George required much inducement to turn against his ministers. He was of opinion that they were unequal to the task of grappling with the problems of government ; and he was greatly alarmed by their readiness to reverse previous decisions taken in parliament—the repeal of the Stamp Act, the abolition of the tax on cider, the parlia-

mentary resolution declaring that general warrants were illegal. In July 1766, therefore, he approached Pitt, letting him understand that he could have *carte blanche* in the disposal of offices; and the royal confidence was emphasised by the dismissal of the ministers actually before Pitt had formally announced his willingness to form a government.

There was great rejoicing throughout the country, and particularly in London, when it was known that "the Great Commoner" was again to be at the helm of the ship of state. It was proposed that London's streets should be illuminated, and that a great banquet should be organised to celebrate the event. The popular ardour was considerably damped, however, when the news went round that Pitt had accepted a peerage; and not even the excuses of his friends could now save him from the accusation of having abandoned his principles for a bauble. As has often been the case in politics, an expert House of Commons man lost his political pre-eminence when safely seated in the Lords. The new ministry might represent the realisation of the royal hopes in that it cut right across party loyalties; but it lacked cohesion, and, as Burke tritely observed, Chatham found himself at the head of "King's friends and republicans, Whigs and Tories, treacherous friends and open enemies."

Moreover, ill-health diminished Chatham's powers of leadership. "The cursed gout" made him peevish and testy in his dealings with his colleagues; and before the administration was many months old there were important withdrawals from its ranks. Early in 1767 the prime minister had to confess that he was too ill to "enter into discussions of business;" and the arduous duties of leadership devolved upon Grafton. The duke muddled through as best as he could, receiving no advice from Chatham and being confronted with intrigues within the Cabinet itself. At the bottom of these intrigues was the brilliant CharlesTownshend who was chancellor of the exchequer; and the quality of his loyalty can be accurately taken from his introduction in parliament of a measure to tax the American colonists in defiance of the known wishes of his colleagues. Grafton breathed more freely when in September 1767 death suddenly cut down Townshend; but the ministerial readjustments which then became necessary could not be said to have added greater weight to the ministry; and no sooner were they effected than Wilkes again strutted across the political scene.

From Grafton's point of view the situation was a particularly delicate one: he had been among the staunchest of Wilkes's friends, and had stoutly championed his cause when George Grenville had set out to break the demagogue's power. But as a responsible minister of the crown, and at that moment virtually the head of the government, he had no alternative but to uphold the decision taken against Wilkes; and his "betrayal" of a friend brought down upon his head a torrent of abuse. His face might have been saved by a royal pardon for Wilkes. That, however, was unthinkable: in George's eyes Wilkes

was a filthy blasphemer and cowardly libeller, who deserved the punishment which the law had meted out to him; and it was against the royal principles to "truckle" to a demagogue. The incidents of the Middlesex election are too well known to call for recital here. The refusal to allow Wilkes to represent the Middlesex voters was a splendid opportunity for the opposition to make a stand on the question of constitutional liberty; and the political outcry against interference with the rights of the electors had violent repercussions in London where mobs were deliberately incited to acts of violence against members of the government. On one occasion a crowd actually invaded the courtyard of St James's Palace; and it required the employment of troops to prevent an attack on the king's person. George's courage never faltered; and we are told that "one could not find out, either in his countenance or his conversation, that everything was not as quiet as usual." He approved of his ministers' action against Wilkes. "If a due firmness is shown with regard to this audacious criminal," he said, "this affair will prove a fortunate one, by restoring a due obedience to the laws;" and none knew better than George the necessity for breaking mob power which made London one of the unsafest cities in Western Europe.

Chatham throughout this crisis was still too indisposed to take any part in the business of government. Nevertheless he was now sufficiently recovered again to take an interest in political affairs; and was gravely disturbed by the news which filtered into his sick room. Not that Chatham had any sympathy for Wilkes; but he had a curious solicitude for constitutional liberty; and he feared that the line adopted by the ministry against Wilkes would degenerate into a dangerous attack on the rights of the electors. Moreover, he was put out by the treatment which had been meted out to some of his friends. Sir Jeffery Amherst had been removed from the governorship of Virginia; and there were clear indications that Shelburne, one of the secretaries of state, was being elbowed out of the Cabinet by his colleagues. In October 1768, therefore, Chatham decided to resign on grounds of ill health, at the same time assuring the king that should it please God to restore him to health every moment of his life would be at His Majesty's disposal.

Chatham's health improved rapidly, and his return to politics in 1769 sounded the death-knell of the Grafton administration. From his place in the Lords he thundered forth his denunciation of the government's handling of the Wilkes affair, declaring that the rights of the Middlesex electors had been shamefully violated, and warning his hearers that what had been done in the case of one constituency could be repeated in another. The attack was followed by the defection of Lord Chancellor Camden; and as a result the ministry was badly shaken. The collapse came when Grafton's nominee for the Woolsack, Charles Yorke, died, as it was widely reported, by his own hand,

in order to escape the dishonour which would be attached to his name by acceptance of the office; and overwhelmed by the thought that he was responsible for that untimely death Grafton resigned.

THE OPPOSITION TRUCULENTLY believed that Grafton's resignation would place them in power. Great was their surprise, therefore, when George asked North to form a ministry; and few for a moment thought that the new prime minister's term of office would extend over a period of twelve years (1770–82). While North was not lacking in political experience (he had been chancellor of the exchequer since 1767), he had demonstrated none of those qualities of leadership looked for in a prime minister; but he was a first-rate classical scholar and a man of wide culture; and his ready and pleasing wit silenced enemies without provoking bitterness or resentment. North was an ideal public servant. His temper was never ruffled by abuse; he was urbanely unmoved by the criticism of opponents. "Nothing," wrote Horace Walpole, "could be more coarse, or clumsy, or ungracious than his outside. Two large prominent eyes that rolled about to no purpose—for he was utterly short-sighted—a wide mouth, thick lips, and inflated visage gave him the air of a blind trumpeter."

George and North had played together as children; and the king was much attracted by the earl's sterling qualities. He knew that North's private life was unscathed by any indiscretion; that he had a fierce hatred of faction; that he shared the royal views on the constitutional interpretations to be placed on "the Revolution Settlement." When it was evident that Grafton's resignation was imminent George confided to North that he meant to ask him to form the next government; and it was more out of loyalty to the king than from motives of ambition that the invitation was accepted.

North's ministry was at the outset in a very precarious position politically; and it required great patience and tact to meet the attacks from the opposition benches in parliament. Sarcasm was met with witty pleasantries; the champions of Wilkes were allowed to talk as much as they liked; and the duties (the duty on tea was excepted) placed by Townshend on imports to the American colonies were removed. "Lord North," wrote a politician of standing in May 1770, "bids fairer for making an able and good minister than any man we have had a great while, Lord Chatham excepted, whose conduct this winter has cancelled many of the obligations this country owed him for his services in administration. I think that our heats are subsiding, and that men are coming to their senses." It was certainly true that as a result of North's tactful handling of parliament there were soon important accessions of strength to the government benches.

Wilkes was irrepressible, and released from prison where he had served the sentence originally passed upon him he came into prominence in the

proceedings taken against the printers of various papers in which regular reports on the happenings in parliament were published. North was too wise to repeat Grenville's mistake, and even George had come to recognise the need for caution in any dealings with Wilkes; and although a great deal of fuss was made in parliament over the publication of debates (which incidentally was contrary to a standing order of the House of Commons), and Brass Crosby and Alderman Oliver before whom one of the printers had charged with assault the messenger sent by the House of Commons to arrest him were committed to the Tower by order of the Speaker of the Commons, the matter was allowed to drop; and there is little doubt that this piece of political wisdom, which resulted in the standing order becoming a dead letter, emanated from George and his prime minister.

By 1772 even Chatham was reluctantly compelled to admit that North had given the country a strong administration; and Burke was bound to agree that "the power of the crown, almost dead and rotten as prerogative, had grown up anew, with more strength and far less odium under the name of influence." Political opponents jeeringly maintained that North was a puppet in the royal hands. They would have clung to that belief even had they known that on more than one occasion between 1770 and 1774 the prime minister had successfully overridden the royal views on certain ministerial appointments. The position was that on the main political issues George and North were of one mind; but unanimity did not prevent each from retaining his own independence of judgment. When Dunning from his place in the House of Commons demanded that the influence of the crown "ought to be diminished" he paid a fine tribute to the harmonious relations of king and prime minister during one of the most difficult periods in our history.

George was an indefatigable worker: he believed that it was his duty to know as much about state affairs as his ministers. That conception of his kingly duty at once laid him open to the charge of meddling with matters which were constitutionally not his concern. George, however, held the view that they were very much his concern. If the king had no right to take an active part in the business of government, who then had that right? Constitutional lawyers were agreed that neither prime minister nor Cabinet had any status in constitutional law. North, for example, refused to accept the former title: he preferred to be known as First Lord Commissioner of the Treasury. In that capacity he was the king's principal adviser: it was not his function to "storm," but rather to share, the royal closet. He used the machinery of Cabinet government because it was politically convenient. George, on the other hand, did not claim the right to preside at Cabinet meetings.

North's administration was a non-party government in the sense that none of its members were irrevocably bound to the old parties. But it was inevitable

that such an arrangement should create another party in politics. That party went by the name of "the King's Friends." George himself certainly did not regard these government supporters as a political party: he looked upon them as public-spirited men whose sole aim was the disinterested service of their king and country. Since they were proud to call themselves his friends, he naturally claimed the right to see that their political actions conformed with their protestations of friendship; and, as his voluminous correspondence proves, he spared no efforts to ensure that they were in their places in parliament when there was the slightest danger of the opposition assailing the government's position. A man of strong prejudices, it was impossible for George not to show resentment when so-called friends ran with the hare and hunted with the hounds; and his behaviour on such occasions was seized upon by the opposition as irrefutable proof that the king was cunningly trying to strengthen his own prerogative at the expense of popular liberties.

What George failed to recognise was that an active participation in politics, even when actuated as it was in his case by a sincere desire to serve his country, would strain to breaking point the constitutional maxim that "the king can do no wrong." Detesting party politics he had the misfortune to become an arrogant party man—even party leader; and in that rôle it was impossible for him to escape the criticism which is of the essence of a system of party government. The mistakes made by North's administration were looked upon as the mistakes of the king; and, paraded as such before an imperfectly educated public opinion by astute politicians, they shook the people's confidence in George himself and did irreparable harm to the institution of monarchy.

AT THE VERY moment when North appeared to be firmly seated in the political saddle the American colonists broke into revolt against the Mother Country. Neither the king nor the prime minister was responsible for that revolt. It was provoked by the popular conception of colonial administration. A colony was a plantation: it existed solely for the benefit of the Mother Country. Colonists by charter might have secured the rights to establish legislative assemblies which gave an appearance of self-government; but those institutions were charged only with the regulation of purely domestic affairs, and the relations of colonies and Mother Country were reserved for the British parliament. Thus, in order to protect home industry, successive governments in London passed Acts prohibiting the development of manufactures in North America; and even Chatham, who was loud in his championship of the revolted colonists, accepted such commercial and industrial measures as inalienable rights of the British parliament.

Stupid though such a policy may now seem, it was defended in the eighteenth

century by a seemingly unanswerable argument. The commercial and industrial inconveniences suffered by the colonists represented the price which they must pay for the protection of the Mother Country against Frenchmen and Spaniards. The object of Grenville's Stamp Act was to provide a revenue to meet the cost of the troops quartered in North America. The outcry against that measure brought into the forefront the fundamental principle on which the old colonial policy was based—the right of the Mother Country to assert her authority over the colonists. In the debates which took place when Rockingham undertook the repeal of the Stamp Act, Grenville, defending his action, stated that old colonial policy in all its nakedness. It was recognised, he said, that taxation was of the essence of the sovereignty of parliament; and when he had introduced the Stamp Act no one in parliament had questioned the principle of the right to tax. "Protection and obedience are reciprocal," he continued. "Great Britain protects America; America is therefore bound to yield obedience." Pitt then tried to draw a subtle distinction between the right to tax and the right to legislate. "No taxation without representation," was the text on which his remarks were based. He forgot an equally ancient axiom, namely, "what touches all must be approved by all;" and it destroyed his contention that parliament had a right to legislate for colonies unrepresented in the British parliament.

The truth is that the British public in general and British politicians in particular were lamentably ignorant of colonial matters. "Most of the places in the gift of the crown have been filled with broken members of parliament of bad if any principles, pimps, valets de chambre, electioneering scoundrels, and even livery servants. In one word, America has for years been made the hospital of England." So said General Huske in 1758; and nearly twenty years later the same point was made by Chief Justice Drayton of South Carolina. "Under the British authority," he said, "governors were sent over to us who were utterly unacquainted with our local interests, the genius of the people, and our laws. Generally they were but too much disposed to obey the mandates of an arbitrary minister, and, if the governor behaved ill, we could not by any peaceable means procure redress."

Rockingham at least endeavoured to understand the American point of view, and while he was in office he arranged for Benjamin Franklin to state the colonists' case at the bar of the House of Commons. "The sea is yours," said Franklin in the course of the examination; "you maintain by your fleets the safety of navigation in it, and keep it clear of pirates. You may have, therefore, a natural and equitable right to some toll or duty on merchandise carried through that part of your dominions, towards defraying the expense you are at in ships to maintain the safety of that carriage." In the light of Franklin's evidence Charles Townshend felt justified in boasting, when in 1767

he brought forward a measure to levy duties on glass, paper, white and red lead, painters' colours, pasteboard, and tea imported into the American colonies, that " he knew the mode by which a revenue might be drawn from the Americans without giving them offence."

The Townshend duties were in the eyes of the colonists a hostile act; and they were bitterly attacked in North America. In 1770, therefore, North proposed to repeal the objectionable Revenue Act; but at the same time it was announced that the duty on tea was to remain; and that attempt to justify the parliamentary right to levy taxes on the colonists completely defeated North's efforts at conciliation. As it happened, on the same day as the prime minister rose to inform parliament that the Townshend duties were to be swept away Boston witnessed that " bloody massacre " which was sedulously used by those working for American independence to inflame public opinion against the British connection; and at the same time liberty of conscience seemed threatened by the news that the Anglican bishops contemplated taking parliamentary powers to establish episcopacy in North America.

The bad blood was thickened by a number of other circumstances. In 1773 the Boston papers published private letters which had passed between Governor Hutchinson and Lieutenant-Governor Oliver of Massachusetts and Thomas Whately, formerly Grenville's private secretary; and the bitterness of the government's attack on Franklin, who had stolen the letters, converted a possible friend of mediation into an implacable enemy. Moreover, it was unfortunate that North's Regulating Act of 1773, the first statesmanlike attempt to deal with the problem of India, should increase the Americans' hostility towards the Mother Country. By this measure the East India Company was to have the monopoly of supplying America with Bohea tea, and was permitted to carry it direct [1] to colonial ports. There is no doubt that North meant this as a concession to the colonists: direct importation would make Bohea tea available for the colonists at 3s. a pound, whereas in the Mother Country the cost was exactly twice that amount. But a principle was involved; and in defence of that principle the Boston " tea party " was organised in December 1773. And the resistance of the people of Boston was the signal for a general display of lawlessness and disorder in the other colonies.

What were George's views on the situation? He shared the contemporary opinion that the British parliament had the right to tax the colonists; he was wholeheartedly in favour of the retention of the duty on tea in order to maintain that right; but at first he hoped that the right to tax might be retained without inflaming colonial tempers; and while it is impossible accurately to state his views on the situation in those early days there is some evidence for thinking that he meant even the duty on tea to become a dead letter. After the Boston

[1] Hitherto it had been reshipped from England.

" tea-party," however, there was no other alternative but to punish the affront on parliamentary honour ; and he was greatly angered by the behaviour of the opposition when North brought in measures to close the port of Boston and suspend the charter to Massachusetts. " The dye is now cast," he wrote to North while the Congress of Philadelphia was in session, " the colonies must either submit or triumph. I do not wish to come to severer measures but we must not retreat ; by coolness and unremitted pursuit of the measures that have been adopted I trust they will come to submit."

George had seemingly turned his face away from conciliation. But was he not after all right ? There were two solutions of the American problem : either to grant the colonists independence and yet to retain the imperial relationship on the basis of a common loyalty to the crown, or to force them by arms to accept the domination of the Mother Country. To have adopted the former solution would have enhanced the power of the crown, and good Whigs would have resisted that happening with every weapon in the political armoury. For the same reason, too, they opposed the alternative solution : the subjugation of the colonists would be a magnificent justification of the royal policy, and would therefore increase the influence of the crown. Not that George himself understood the system of imperialism which has come into being in our own time ; but he can hardly be blamed for wishing to play the part of a father resolved to chastise his unruly children ; and had he been loyally supported by his subjects the North American colonies might have remained within the structure of the British Empire.

The behaviour of the opposition in parliament was dictated solely by a desire to obstruct the government at every turn. When Rockingham was in office George Grenville persisted in claiming that it was the sacred duty of parliament to enforce his Stamp Act : but he condemned in the strongest language the Townshend duties ; and when in 1770 Pownall, one of the few members of parliament with a first-hand knowledge of American affairs, proposed that even the duty on tea should be taken off, Grenville rose in his place to state that in his opinion Pownall's amendment did not go far enough! Chatham, too, played a curiously inconsistent part during the critical years preceding the outbreak of hostilities. He could condemn in no uncertain way the Boston " tea party," describing it as " certainly criminal ; " but soon he was found applauding the resistance of the colonists ; and an analysis of his utterances on the American question makes it at least possible to appreciate George's contempt for the behaviour of the veteran statesman. He was to his king merely " a trumpet of sedition," whose words only served to encourage the colonists in their resistance to the Mother Country. Thus, when in 1777 Chatham proposed as a means of composing the quarrel that the government should repeal " every repressive Act passed since 1763," and at the same time made a

slashing attack on the employment of German mercenaries against the colonial militia, George angrily penned the following letter to North:

> I am much pleased with your attention in sending me a copy of Lord Chatham's highly unseasonable motion, which can have no other use but to convey some fresh fuel if attended to by the rebels; like most of the other productions of that extraordinary brain it contains nothing but specious words and malevolence, for no one that reads it, if unacquainted with the conduct of the Mother Country and its colonies, must suppose the Americans poor mild persons who after unheard of grievances had no choice but slavery or the sword; whilst the truth is, that the two [sic] great lenity of this country encreased their pride and encouraged them to rebel; . . . if his sentiments were adopted, I should not esteem my situation in this country as a very dignified one, for the islands would soon also cast off all obedience.

North himself did not lose hope of being able to conciliate the colonists. In 1778 he boldly informed the king that he thought the time was ripe "to take some step of a pacifick kind in parliament;" and a month later he actually announced that the government proposed to bring in two bills, the one to surrender the parliamentary right to tax the colonists, the other to appoint commissioners to adjust all matters in dispute between them and the Mother Country. Charles Fox, hitherto a relentless opponent of the government, at once promised North his support; and the bills passed both Houses with comfortable majorities. The interesting point is that these measures were brought in contrary to the royal wishes. George warned North against a too hasty decision on the subject of conciliation, telling him that it might be misconstrued in the colonies and also that it might offend "this country which has in the most handsome manner chearfully [sic] carried on the contest, and therefore has a right to have the struggle continued untill convinced that it is in vain." But North's personal convictions overrode the royal advice. It is interesting to find, too, that there was no resentment on George's part: when the two bills were before parliament he even wrote to congratulate the prime minister on their reception in the Commons.

North, however, was most unhappy in his situation. In March 1778 he frankly told the king that he feared "His Majesty and the nation were in most imminent danger of suffering the greatest evils by reposing so much in a person who is not equal to the execution of the trust;" and advised him to ask Chatham to form a government. On one point George's mind was made up: he would never again approach Chatham. "It is not private pique," he said, "but an opinion formed on an experience of a reign of now seventeen years." Every form of argument was used to prevent North's resignation, and the move to bring back Chatham was dramatically ended in May by the earl's death.

George did everything in his power to lighten North's burden. He took an active personal interest in the efforts which were made to prevent a landing of

the French in his kingdom; he even travelled to Portsmouth to supervise the naval preparations. When the opposition tried to embarrass North by criticising the length of time taken by the fleet in putting out to sea George administered a splendid rebuke: "It is very absurd in gentlemen unacquainted with the immense detail of naval affairs to trouble the House of Commons with matters totally foreign to the truth; if I was now writing from my own ideas only I should be as absurd as them; but Keppel, Pallisser, Parker, and Hood are men whose knowledge in that science may be trusted."

Defeat brought despondency to the country, and North's position in parliament grew slowly weaker. A defeat in the Commons badly rattled the prime minister, and he at once informed George that "it is become too clear that they no longer wish to see Lord North." The king tried to encourage him: "I am convinced," he wrote, "this country will never regain a proper tone unless ministers as in the reign of King William will not mind now and then being in a minority, particularly on subjects that have always carried some weight with popular opinions." North's despondency, however, troubled the king, and eventually tried his patience. "Nothing advantageous can be obtained without some hazard," he observed; but in his heart of hearts he knew that North was too dispirited to initiate a policy of resolution.

The war, in which both France and Spain were now allies of the colonies, was allowed to drag miserably on; and when news came that Cornwallis had surrendered at Yorktown (October 1781) North's courage completely deserted him. "O God, it is all over!" he said with the greatest emotion to Germaine who brought him the news of the disaster. George, on the other hand, never for a moment lost heart, though he felt the blow to British prestige as keenly as North. "Many men," he wrote to North, "choose rather to despond on difficulties than see how to get out of them. . . . With the assistance of parliament I do not doubt if measures are well concerted a good end may yet be made to this war, but if we despond certain ruin ensues." North never recovered from the news of Yorktown; and in February 1782, when an opposition resolution to the effect that "the war on the Continent of North America might no longer be pursued for the impracticable purpose of reducing the inhabitants of that country to obedience" was carried, he wrote to advise George to "see as soon as possible what other system can be found," since the opposition victory clearly demonstrated that "the House of Commons seems now to have withdrawn their confidence from Lord North."

The only way out of the difficulty was either to effect a ministerial reshuffle or to ask the opposition leaders to form a government. The former alternative was found to be impracticable, and George was so obstinately hostile to the latter that he even threatened to abdicate in favour of the Prince of Wales. North pleaded with him not to take such a hasty step: "where an absolute

Allan Ramsay.

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GEORGE III.

necessity exists," he wrote, "wisdom will teach us to submit to it with the best grace possible;" and on his recommendation George consented to see Shelburne. The earl, however, maintained that Rockingham had a prior claim to the honour of forming a government; but George was so strongly prejudiced against the marquis that he ignored the advice, and for a moment hoped that Gower might be persuaded to succeed North. That plan failed: there remained no alternative but to accept Rockingham as prime minister.

The new ministers took up office firmly convinced that George would double-cross them, and their relations with the king were influenced by that suspicion. That George had little confidence in Rockingham and his friends is certain: at the same time his behaviour towards them was scrupulously correct; and before the administration was a month old Charles Fox could inform a friend that "the king seems in perfect good humour and does not seem to make any of those difficulties which others make for him." They were determined, however, to do three things: first, end the quarrel with the colonists; second, limit the influence of the crown; and third, effect a rigid economy in the various departments of state. But the intentions of the ministry were seriously impaired by the jealousies of the ministers. The two secretaries of state, Shelburne and Fox, failed to work harmoniously; and Rockingham's refusal to bring in a measure of electoral reform, so vehemently advocated by him and his friends when out of office, laid the administration open to the charge of political dishonesty.

Rockingham's death on 1st July 1782 brought the rivalry of Shelburne and Fox to a head. The latter, knowing full well that George would never accept him as prime minister, manœuvred to insinuate Portland into that office; but Shelburne had taken the precaution to secure the royal confidence, and he was invited to become Rockingham's successor. In the belief that his withdrawal would compel Shelburne to come to him cap in hand Fox sent in his resignation; and he was bitterly disillusioned when not only were no overtures made to him, but when he found that few of his friends followed him into the political wilderness.

The chief plank in the platform of the Shelburne administration was the recognition of American independence as a part of a general peace settlement. His political opponents, the chief of whom was of course Charles Fox, argued that the recognition of independence should precede the peace to be made with France and Spain. When the preliminaries of the peace came before parliament Shelburne's policy was immediately challenged, and to everyone's amazement North joined the ranks of the opposition. His argument was that the government could have secured more favourable terms: that they had not done so was a proof of incompetence. In the Commons the defence of the government's policy was ably undertaken by the young Pitt; but the forces

arrayed against Shelburne were not to be broken by oratory, and in February 1783 the government resigned.

For six weeks George kept his country without a government. On Shelburne's resignation—George insisted that it was a shameful "desertion"—he sent for Pitt; but the young man said that much as he would have liked to accede to the royal request it was not in his power to give the country "a stable government." Gower was next approached: he, too, declined the invitation. It now remained for George to approach North or Fox, and whichever course he decided upon would be most distasteful to him, for he could never forgive the former for his part in the overthrow of the Shelburne administration, and he suspected that the latter would use his accession to power to advance some of his disreputable friends to office.[1] In parliament opposition speakers did not hesitate to criticise the delay in finding a successor to Shelburne; but George refused point blank to "put the treasury into the hands of the head of a faction"—meaning Portland whom both North and Fox recommended as prime minister; and only when he had explored every avenue of escape, and sadly found that "not a single man is willing to come to my assistance," did he surrender to what he described as "the most daring and unprincipled faction that the annals of this kingdom ever produced."

George made no attempt to hide his dislike of the Portland administration. "A ministry which I have avowedly attempted to avoid," he wrote, "by calling on every other description of men, cannot be supposed to have either my favour or confidence; and as such I shall certainly refuse any honours they may ask for." Once again the royal treatment of the ministers was scrupulously correct. "The king," wrote Fox, "continues to behave with every sign of civility, and sometimes even with cordiality." However, he turned the tables neatly on Portland when he learnt that the ministers' first thoughts were concerned with the allowance of the Prince of Wales (see p. 366), and he watched with a good deal of delight the rising tide of public opinion against the government's handling of the unratified treaty of peace and the refusal to champion electoral reform.[2]

The downfall of the administration was due to Fox's India Bill. It was an extremely wise measure, which would undoubtedly have bestowed great benefits upon the peoples of India; but it was an attack on vested interests; and it also implied a limitation of the influence of the crown in that it transferred to parliament the right to nominate the commissioners responsible for the political power wielded by the East India Company. Pitt championed vested interests

[1] That there was justification for such a view is evidenced by Northington's letter to Fox. See *George the Third*, J. D. Griffith Davies, p. 207.

[2] George himself was not in favour of tampering with the electoral system, but Fox had long advocated reform; and his silence on the question when in office was undoubtedly one of the reasons for his declining popularity in the country.

in a brilliant speech which, if it did not prevent the passage of the measure through the Commons, had a profound effect upon the merchant classes, and stiffened the resistance which was to be expected in the Lords. George never for a moment concealed his dislike of the India Bill, and he personally saw that waverers in the Lords were informed that support for it would incur the full weight of the royal displeasure. Not unnaturally the government supporters condemned his behaviour. A resolution to the effect "that to report the king's opinion on any question pending in parliament with a view to influencing votes was a high crime and misdemeanour" was carried in the Commons; but while the victors argued among themselves about the next step to be taken against the intriguing monarch the Lords threw out the bill; and George promptly dismissed the ministers (December 1783).

His action—for the government commanded a safe majority in the Commons and could also rely upon the support of the majority of the Lords for most of their measures—was roundly criticised. Was such criticism justified? Lord Chancellor Campbell in his *Lives of the Chancellors* thought that it was not. "If it ever be excusable in a King of England to cabal against his ministers," he wrote, "George III. may well be defended for the course he now took; for they had been forced upon him by a factious intrigue, and public opinion was decidedly in his favour." Not many months were to elapse before the voters showed their lack of confidence in the more prominent members of the ministry; but the gift of prophecy is not a virtue in a constitutional monarch, and had George been convinced that the India Bill was contrary to the wishes of the voters his proper action was to have vetoed it.

THE MAN TO whom he now offered the premiership was William Pitt, and the invitation was immediately accepted. Pitt was in his twenty-fifth year; and he possessed all the confidence and courage of youth. At the feet of his distinguished father he had learnt the art of politics; he was a convincing speaker; he was endowed with an illimitable supply of patience; and he had a capacity for hard work. Although he had only been in parliament for less than three years he had shown himself to be a man of resource and character, who would sacrifice his principles neither for the favours of a sovereign nor the advancement of a faction; and when he accepted the king's invitation to form a ministry he did so in the sure belief that it was in his power to rid the country of the rule of faction-ridden Whiggery. A Whig himself by upbringing, he saw that his party was too riven by faction ever to command the respect of the country; and unshackled by stupid traditional loyalties he proceeded to create a new party which was to be inspired by the ideal of disinterested service of the state. He could profit by the mistakes of his opponents; he possessed tremendous powers of assimilation of ideas; he was known to be

a thoroughly honest politician: these were his assets, and they were not shared by his political opponents.

The dismissed ministers' supporters greeted the news that "Mr William Pitt had kissed hands" with considerable merriment. Fox had twitted him not many days previously with being "a boy without judgment, experience, or knowledge of the world;" and soon the ranks of Whiggery were to chuckle over the two lines in *The Rolliad*:

> "A sight to make surrounding nations stare,
> A kingdom trusted to a schoolboy's care."

The amusement increased when the names of the new ministers became known. Admittedly they were a "scratch lot;" but they were prepared to hang on under Pitt's leadership; and for the moment that was all that he asked of them.

There was nothing in Pitt's short political career to encourage George to think that he had found a prime minister who would carry out the royal wishes without question. The new prime minister was passionately committed to the reform of the franchise, which the king thought "highly dangerous;" his utterances in parliament were characterised by a fierce independence which it would be dangerous to challenge. But George had now come to middle-age when security and tranquillity are desired; and by no means a bad judge of character he saw in Pitt the one man in politics capable of giving the country a taste of honest government. No conditions were made when Pitt took office: all George asked of him was deliverance from the tutelage imposed by Portland and his colleagues.

Pitt kept a watchful eye on the political pulse: he had made up his mind to appeal to the country as soon as it indicated that public opinion was in his favour. Had Fox and his friends forced a dissolution at the outset they might have made the new government's position untenable; but aware of their diminishing popularity in the constituencies, and convinced that they would be able to overthrow the government by obstructionist tactics in parliament, they also strove to avoid a dissolution; and by so doing played into Pitt's hands. It was no easy matter for Pitt to persuade his colleagues of the wisdom of this plan, and even George himself would have welcomed an immediate appeal to the electors. In January 1784 he wrote to the prime minister: "I own I cannot see the reason, if the thing is practicable that a dissolution should not be effected: if not I fear the constitution of this country cannot subsist." Pitt eventually persuaded him that "the thing" was not practicable; but the king remained uneasy at the thought of being served by a government whose measures were consistently defeated in parliament; and only when Pitt informed him that he would resign unless he had his way did he cease pestering the prime minister about the dissolution.

Pitt's plan worked perfectly: by March 1784 he was able to inform the king that the government found itself in a minority of only one in the Commons; and petitions from all parts of the country indicated that he had the support of public opinion. So at last the dissolution was ordered, and in the subsequent election Pitt's candidates were widely adopted. Head of the poll in Middlesex was Wilkes, who stood for "the constitution, Mr Pitt, and the king;" and one hundred and sixty of Fox's supporters, called by a wit "Fox's Martyrs," lost their seats.

Pitt's triumph was the eclipse of the old Whig party: it also is a landmark in the development of British kingship. Until 1801 Pitt was to remain undisputed master of the political situation. His policy was conceived by his own estimate of the public good; his great strength of character and striking powers of political leadership made it quite unnecessary for George to interfere in the business of government; and so the king was able to withdraw quietly into the background of the political arena, thereby escaping much of the heat and dust of party strife and coming forward only to perform those functions in public life which are most graciously performed by royalty. Not that George's interest in state affairs diminished while Pitt was at the helm: it was as keen as ever it had been; but it was more detached, and therefore more strictly constitutional.

None of his ministers served George better than Pitt; yet to the end their relationship was that of sovereign and minister. There were times when the prime minister's magnificent services to his country called for personal congratulation and handsome recognition by the sovereign; but it was all done in an impersonal way, and it lost none of its graciousness for that reason. Under Pitt's influence, indirect though it was, George was brought to the heart of the Revolution Settlement: he came to understand and appreciate, as he had never understood and appreciated during the first twenty-three years of his reign, that the King of England while of the government must always remain above it.

George watched with genuine delight Pitt's measures to give the country "strong government." He applauded his India Bill, which passed through parliament during 1784, and endorsed his line of action during the impeachment of Warren Hastings. As it happened, George was singularly well informed on Indian affairs, and his views were much more enlightened than those of some of his more powerful subjects. During Clive's trial by the House of Commons in 1773 he wrote to North as follows:

> I owne I am amazed that private interest could make so many forget what they owe to their country, and come to a resolution that seems to approve of Lord Clive's rapine; no one thinks his services greater than I do, but that can never be a reason to commend him in what certainly opened the door to the fortunes we see daily made in that country.

Similarly, in 1784 he informed Pitt that there was to be no defence of " those shocking enormities in India that disgrace human nature."

Convinced that the constitution was " the most perfect of human formation," it was natural that George should think it " unfortunate " that Pitt should propose to bring in a franchise reform which would give London and the larger counties additional representation; but he generously informed the prime minister " that as he was clear of the propriety of the measure he ought to lay his thoughts before the House; " and he warned him not to take any notice of statements made to the effect that he had influenced any one against the proposal. Undoubtedly George was pleased when the reform bill was negatived by parliament in 1785.

In the summer of 1788 " a pretty smart bilious attack " was the first symptom of that distressing mental illness which finally deprived George of his reason. His doctor, who deserved everyone's sympathy—for the king was one of those men who have remedies for every ailment and was tantalisingly disrespectful of orthodox medical advice—sent him to Cheltenham " to take the waters " and to keep him " from certain fatigues that attend long audiences." The change and rest benefited him; and, always an active man, he visited the country around Cheltenham. One day, for example, he travelled to " the clothing country near Stroud; " and the sight of the factories working at top pressure, and the information gleaned from the workers that the district had never known better times, gave him the utmost satisfaction. But on his return to London in the autumn he was again taken ill; and the wildest rumours about the state of his health caused considerable anxiety in the city. On 24th October he held a public drawing-room, as he confessed to Pitt, " to stop further lies and any fall of the stocks." It was the act of a brave man, for he was very ill at the time.

At last the news leaked out: the king's reason was so seriously impaired that he was incapable of attending to business. At last the real extent of his popularity with his people was revealed. Prayers for his recovery were offered up in churches, chapels, and even synagogues; the royal doctors were threatened with the direst consequences if the royal patient did not recover; silent crowds clustered about the palace gates to hear the latest reports. In marked contrast was the behaviour of the Prince of Wales and his Whig friends. In Brooks' Club toasts were drunk to the day when the prince would ascend the throne; and all arrangements were made for Pitt's dismissal when that event occurred.

The prime minister knew what was on foot: he was resolved to play for time, and if a regency had to be established to limit its powers. His plan called down upon his head all the fury of the Whig opposition. The debates on the Regency Bill were characterised by an extravagance of language seldom heard in parliament. Burke, for example, talked about the king as " having been by the Almighty hurled from his throne; " and in his ponderous way inveighed

bitterly against the prime minister's "treason" in trying to keep the prince from the enjoyment of "his own." The ladies of the opposition paraded the streets in "regency caps" which cost anything from seven guineas upwards. Pitt held to his course: in February 1789 the bill passed the Commons by a comfortable majority; and was sent up to the Lords. Then came the news that George had recovered: the need for a regency was past.

The public rejoicing was a bitter pill for the Prince of Wales and his friends. "London," we are told, "displayed a blaze of light from one extremity to the other; the illuminations extending without any metaphor from Hampstead and Highgate to Clapham, and even as far as Tooting; while the vast distance between Greenwich and Kensington presented the same dazzling appearance. The poorest mechanics contributed their proportion, and instances were exhibited of cobblers' stalls decorated with one or two farthing candles. There was a thanksgiving service in St Paul's. As George entered the building five thousand children sang the hundredth psalm. Overcome with emotion, the king turned to a friend and said: "I now feel I have been ill."

A long holiday at Weymouth with the queen and their younger children followed as part of the convalescence. The royal party bathed regularly, and the king moved about the town and neighbouring countryside often unattended, and always ready to have a chat with anyone he met during his rambles. Nothing could be more simple and unassuming than the life of the royal family by the seaside; but it was nevertheless ridiculed by the satirists and cartoonists in Whig pay; and George's personal interest in the domestic arrangements of his household and genial affability to humble subjects were characterised as proof of parsimony and lack of mental balance. But he was quite unmoved by those low-down attacks. He was now more certain than ever he had been of the respect and love of his subjects; and that meant more to him than the favours of the great Whig lords.

His outlook towards the French Revolution was traditionally British. He disliked revolution, and was amazed that Fox and his radical friends could applaud the disorderly behaviour of the Parisian mob. It gave him great satisfaction to find, on the other hand, old political enemies coming forward to join the ranks of the government; and he thought highly of *Reflections on the French Revolution*, published in 1790 by Burke, once a stalwart of the Foxite Whigs. His confidence in Pitt and his colleagues was unqualified; and the British minister at the Hague could write to a kinsman to say that as long as the "king remains so, the tranquillity of the country is on a rock, for the public prosperity is great and the nation is right-minded." Time had mellowed George considerably; and in December 1791 it could be reported that "he speaks even of those who are opposed to his government with complacency and without a sneer or acrimony." When the inevitability of war made Pitt recognise the

need of burying the political hatchet and setting up a coalition ministry, George was by no means averse from the proposal, even though it might result in Fox becoming a secretary of state; and when that war came, bringing in its train hard burdens for the backs of his subjects, he was indefatigable in his efforts to inspire the nation.

In the festered womb of war was conceived a strong anti-monarchial feeling. As early as 1790 a stone was thrown at George as he rode in his coach to open parliament; on a similar errand four years later he was roughly handled by a crowd maddened by high prices and the lack of the ordinary necessaries of life; and in 1800 a crazed trooper shot at him as he watched Cibber's comedy *She Would and She Would Not* in Drury Lane Theatre. His courage on all these occasions won for him golden opinions from his subjects; and curiously enough when the sailors mutinied at the Nore and flew a red flag on the king's ships they ran up the royal standard on his birthday. "I am not ignorant of the character of the British sailor," he once observed: "he may be misled for a time, but he will eventually return to his duty."

The unhappy state of Ireland caused the king considerable anxiety. The lawlessness which prevailed there offended his sense of decency and order; but he was not always convinced that the fault lay with Irishmen; and nothing would have given him greater pleasure than to have bettered the lot of his Irish subjects. Unfortunately, an intense hatred of popery and mistrust for Presbyterianism, which he liked to call "Scotch metaphysics," made the king himself the most formidable obstacle to a better understanding with Ireland.

Pitt, never afraid to face facts, knew that the Irish question must be squarely faced and constructively dealt with. The United Irishmen, founded by Edward fitzGerald and Wolfe Tone, and originally supported by Catholics and Protestants alike, slowly became a separatist organisation; and at the end of 1796 the French revolutionary government sent Hoche and a competent force to assist the Irish patriots to rid their country of the hated English. Pitt's plan was to unite the legislatures of Great Britain and Ireland: it would, he believed, "raise the minds of Irishmen from local to imperial aims," and in time effect a complete and harmonious blending of the two races. That the union was to be the prelude to relief for the Irish Catholics was recognised if not openly admitted; and with this prospect dangled before them catholic Irishmen subscribed to the plan with eagerness. In 1800 the Irish parliament voted its extinction; and the stage was set for the next act in the Irish drama.

From the outset of the negotiations for the union George was suspicious of the government's intentions. He was ready to admit that the union might bring benefits to both countries; but he sincerely hoped "government is not pledged to anything in favour of the Roman Catholics;" and when he was informed that "it will be a matter for future consideration" he at once let it

be known that he would never violate his coronation oath by endorsing Catholic emancipation. He was torn with anxious fears when he learnt of Pitt's plan—first, the endowment of the catholic and nonconformist clergy; second, the commutation of tithes then payable to an alien and minority church; and, third, the imposition of a political in place of a religious test to enable Catholics to sit in parliament and qualify for state employment. Lord Chancellor Loughborough, whose loyalty to Pitt left much to be desired, plainly inferred that subscription to the plan would be a violation of the coronation oath; and his opinion was endorsed by Archbishop Moore of Canterbury and Archbishop Stewart of Armagh.

What was he to do? George asked himself that question scores of times a day. He was closely bound to Pitt whom he knew only wished to serve his country in the best way: he was more deeply attached to the Church of England which he believed was endangered by Pitt's plan. Conscience assured him that for once Pitt had made an error of judgment, and that it was his bounden duty to resist by every means at his disposal his prime minister's plan. Pitt stated his case persuasively. His plan, he said, "would be attended by no danger to the established church;" the pacification of Ireland would speedily be effected "by gradually attaching the popish clergy to the government." At the same time the prime minister plainly hinted that the rejection of his proposals would necessitate his resignation.

George weighed them carefully, and sought the advice of trusted friends. "Where is that power on earth to absolve me from the due observance of every sentence of that oath, particularly the one requiring me to maintain the protestant religion?" Politicians inferred that the power resided in parliament; his spiritual advisers, on the other hand, maintained that he was irrevocably bound. At his time of life the tranquillity which he enjoyed from Pitt's government meant much to him; but the safety of his immortal soul was his first consideration; and in February 1801 he reluctantly accepted Pitt's resignation. It is not surprising that reaction followed: beneath the awful strain imposed upon it George's mind gave way; and only on Pitt's generous undertaking never again to raise the question of catholic emancipation was his recovery assured. "Now my mind will be at rest," he said when Pitt's message came to hand: however, it was some months before George was sufficiently recovered to conduct state business.

ADDINGTON WAS PITT'S successor. His capabilities as a politician were limited; and not until he was certain of Pitt's support would he consent to form a government. The country was eager for peace; and the new government's first task was to secure terms which would be accepted as satisfactory and honourable. Preliminaries were concluded in October 1801; parliamentary approval followed a

few months later; and the Peace of Amiens was formally signed in March 1802. Addington himself was highly pleased. Not so the King: he welcomed the termination of hostilities, but he was convinced that the peace was "an experimental peace," sharing with Sheridan the view that it was "a peace which all men are glad of, but no man can be proud of;" and in his own mind he was confident that war would break out again.

George was right. The boundless ambition of Bonaparte converted a revolutionary into an imperialist war; and as the danger grew more imminent the clamour for Pitt's return to office became louder and louder. Addington, however, found that he liked office: not only was he opposed to an accommodation with Pitt, but he undoubtedly left an impression with the king that the former prime minister meant to gain his ends in a discreditable manner; and consequently George was not a little incensed against Pitt. The war came in the summer of 1803, and with it the news that a French invasion was threatened. George personally arranged for the security of his queen and their daughters in such an eventuality: they were to go to his good friend Hurd, Bishop of Worcester, while he "at the head of" his troops would stand forth to resist the Frenchmen. The "invasion scare" produced an unseemly quarrel between the king and the Prince of Wales (see pp. 371–2); and coupled with the anxious times through which the nation passed resulted in a return of the king's mental trouble.

As George lay ill during the early part of 1804 Addington's administration was subjected to deadly criticism in parliament. Pitt was in a difficult position. He had "pledged" himself to support Addington, but the knowledge that the prime minister had misrepresented him to the king in the previous summer and a conviction that in the crisis it was his duty to come to his country's aid even if it meant the breaking of his pledged word forced him into opposition. George could not appreciate Pitt's standpoint when he was made aware of it during convalescence: he was also obliged "to express his astonishment that Mr Pitt" in his scheme for a coalition government should contemplate bringing Fox into office. But these strictures upon Pitt's conduct brought him nowhere; and he was only too painfully aware that Addington on his own could not lead the country to victory. At last Lord Chancellor Eldon persuaded George to sink his differences with Pitt and see him; and in May 1804 a new government with Pitt at its head took office.

It was not the administration "on a broad bottom" which Pitt had planned to give the country. George would not hear of Fox's admission to office; and Pitt's choice of colleagues was therefore limited to his own and Addington's followers. Fox's behaviour was "truly handsome." "I myself am too old to care now about office," he said, "but I have many friends who for years have followed me. I shall advise them now to join the government, and I trust Pitt can give

them places." Pitt would have gladly done so had they not preferred to share their leader's exclusion; and their absence from the ministerial benches, due as Macaulay maintained to "royal obstinacy," was a national misfortune. On the other hand, it is at least doubtful whether Pitt and Fox would have worked harmoniously together.

Bad health, a Europe crying out for leadership against Napoleonic domination, a cunningly planned attack on a friend's honour,[1] overwhelmed Pitt during the latter part of 1805. The "cure" at Bath failed to restore him to health; and in January 1806 the country was staggered to learn that the prime minister was dead. George collapsed on hearing the news; and for two days he was so overcome with grief that he could not see his ministers. But a king is not allowed to dwell upon his sorrows; and the country's urgent need was a successor to Pitt. Hawkesbury refused to form a government, and that left George with no other alternative but to send for Grenville, who at once made it clear that he would only act if Fox was allowed to be one of his colleagues. "There are to be no exclusions," was the king's quiet reply.

At their first official meeting George greeted Fox with no show of animosity or bitterness. "Mr Fox," he said, "I little thought you and I should ever meet again in this place. But I have no desire to look back upon old grievances, and you may rest assured I shall never remind you of them." "My deeds, and not my words, shall commend me to your majesty," was Fox's gracious reply. And on the authority of Fox's secretary we have it that George was highly delighted at the new secretary of state's attention to his duties. "His Majesty," wrote Trotter, "who was always extremely regular and punctual in the discharge of his own high duties, said that the office had never been conducted in such a manner before, and expressed much satisfaction at Mr Fox's mode of doing business." The fates had decreed that their association should be a short one. Early in June 1806 Fox's health gave way: in September death claimed him; and it was characteristic of George's frankness that he should confess to Sidmouth (Addington) that he little thought he would "ever live to regret Mr Fox's death."

There were signs that George's health was breaking. Cataract on his eyes made it difficult for him to read and write; and inability to take an active part in state business made him apathetic and listless. The unfilial behaviour of members of his own family, and particularly the incident of "The Delicate Investigation" (see p. 373), the fear that the ministry reconstituted on Fox's death would revive the question of emancipation for the Catholics, the realisation that he was now an old man, were burdens which weighed heavily upon him.

[1] The friend was Melville (Dundas): he was charged with having appropriated to his own use admiralty funds; and much to Pitt's dismay it was Sidmouth (Addington) who pressed for an inquiry into Melville's conduct.

He asserted his old independence when the ministry attempted to grant a minor measure of relief to Catholics serving in the army; and on the ministerial refusal to abandon the measure he dismissed Grenville and his colleagues. The full weight of the Whig wrath descended upon his head for his action, and once again the old cry was raised that there was an unseen power behind the throne which ought to be removed; but George knew that the majority of his subjects approved of his action; and he was unmoved by the criticism levelled against him.

Portland followed Grenville: he and his colleagues did their best to grapple with the difficulties which confronted them at home and abroad. The high price of corn brought suffering into the homes of the poor; and there was a widespread desire for peace. But how could there be peace when Napoleon was master of the greater part of Europe? Soon he would turn against the "nation of shopkeepers;" and the only defence against such an eventuality was a resolute attack on the French position. Already British statesmen had determined the nature of that defence—a relentless economic war against France and her satellites; and the economic measures which Napoleon took to break down that defence, while they were doomed to failure in the end, brought with them unemployment and want for British workers.

George was now completely blind, and the greater part of his time was spent at Windsor. He followed the course of the war with his usual interest; he was bitterly hurt by the "Duke and Darling" scandal of 1809 in which his second son Frederick was involved; he watched with dismay the lack of unity in the cabinet which culminated in the quarrel between Canning and Castlereagh. Portland's retirement necessitated another ministerial reshuffle; and once again the old question of catholic emancipation loomed on the horizon, since Perceval, Portland's successor, insisted upon making overtures to Grenville and his friends. Those overtures proved abortive; and for the moment the king was spared another clash with his ministers.

In the autumn of 1809 his health was so bad that the royal doctors believed that another period of mental derangement was imminent. He rallied somewhat during the spring and early summer of the following year. Then a terrible blow descended upon him. His youngest child Amelia was taken ill "with the consumption." George loved young children; he was always an adoring father; and as the little princess lay dying in her room the blind king was in constant attendance on her. Shortly before her death he confessed that he feared he would go mad with grief should anything happen to his little girl; and when the end came the country learnt that their king was dangerously ill. He recovered sufficiently to learn of the government's proposals for a regency. He took the news calmly, admitting that it was time that he retired; but he would not entertain the thought of abdicating when it was suggested by Perceval,

and as he signed the bill which was to deprive him of his right to play a king's part he whimsically observed that he found it as distasteful as others had found it to be deprived of office (February 1811).

FOR NINE LONG years Windsor Castle gave kindly shelter to the pathetic shadow of a once active king. Unable to comprehend the present, the afflicted monarch could find solace in memories of the past. He conversed with the shades of the great men whom he had known during his long reign; he talked gaily to angels whom he believed were his constant attendants. Madness could not destroy his love of music: he strummed on the harpsichord and played the flute; and once, so it was said, he took infinite pains to arrange a programme of music descriptive of madness. It is not known how often sanity returned to him: nor what was told him in those brief moments of understanding. On 29th January 1820 the end came: a month later he was laid to rest with his ancestors in St George's Chapel at Windsor.

Whatever may have been George III.'s faults as a king—and they were not nearly as serious as Whig historians would have their readers believe—he was always a typical Englishman. In another place I have said that "he loved respectability because he was too unimaginative to be unconventional. He shared the Englishman's belief in the superiority of England and everything English. He had the Englishman's amiability and bigotry, courage, and obstinacy." These qualities were understood and appreciated by his subjects in the humbler walks of life. The scorn which was poured upon "Farmer George" was virtually a compliment for George III.: it was a tribute to his keen personal interest in a calling which in this country has always been a most honourable one, and from which have come the staunch friends of royalty and the sworn enemies of revolution. The hatreds which he aroused by his incursions into politics—incursions deliberately planned to place government above party—were bitter; but George nevertheless always retained that quiet dignity which mysteriously emanates from the throne; and his accessibility to his subjects was the prelude to that feeling of unity between king and people so perfectly understood in our own time.

CHAPTER IV

GEORGE III.'S SONS

George IV. : 1820–1830
William IV. : 1830–1837

QUEEN CHARLOTTE HATED St James's Palace: to her it was a cheerless place, more like a prison than a home. But convention decreed that the king's children should be born in London; and at the end of July 1762, the royal household removed from the pleasant countryside of Richmond to a London in which raged a terrible epidemic of influenza. On 12th August the queen was safely delivered of a son; and Londoners made holiday when the bells of the city's churches pealed out the glad news. Wiseacres said that the baby was born with a golden spoon in his mouth: his birth had coincided with the arrival in the capital of the bullion found in the hold of the captured *Hermione*; and as the crowds met in the streets to discuss "the interesting event" they watched great carts carrying the gold to the vaults of the Bank of England. When the baby was a fortnight old he was christened. The service took place in a private room in the palace; and the officiating minister, Archbishop Secker of Canterbury, was exceedingly proud of the fact that he had also christened and married the happy father. The customary reception took place a day or two later. The queen received a select company of the great lords and ladies of the land, propped up in her bed, which was carried for the occasion into the Drawing-Room. The visitors were allowed to have a peep at the baby; and to prevent any of them touching him his cradle was protected by "a Chinese fence." Charlotte was inordinately proud of her first-born. She had his little body modelled in wax, and "the work of art" (so contemporaries described it) was placed in a glass case which for long years reposed on the queen's dressing-table.

George III. was particularly anxious that his children should be well brought up, and that they should enjoy the dignity which belonged to their exalted stations. When the baby George was three he was made a Knight of the Garter; and four years later a formal reception was held in his honour. He was on that occasion dressed in a toga "according to the Roman custom;" and was supported by his brother Frederick Duke of York, and sister Charlotte Princess Royal. The king's enemies thought fit to ridicule that reception; and one of the cartoonists in their pay depicted the aristocracy of the land paying its respects to a little Prince of Wales busily engaged in flying a kite!

It was arranged that the future George IV. should be brought up with his little brother Frederick at the Bower Lodge at Kew. Their first tutors were the scholarly Dr Markham, Bishop of Chester, Dr Cyril Jackson, the young Oxford don who was to become Dean of Christ Church, M. de Sulzas, a Swiss teacher of languages, and Lord Holdernesse: in 1776 these tutors were replaced by Dr Hurd, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, who became one of George III.'s dearest friends, a Mr Arnold, and Lord Bruce. The king was insistent that his sons were not to be pampered in any way. The round of lessons was punctuated by walks in the district and "polite amusements;" and the two boys were made to go to bed and rise early. George IV.'s apologists often try to explain away many of his failings by this rigid system of education.

The young princes were drilled in the classics, languages, elocution, deportment, art, and even farming; and the tutors quickly discovered that George's intellectual capacity was infinitely superior to that of his brother. He showed a preference for classical literature, and was especially interested in Tacitus: art bored him; and the instruction on farming usually provided him with the opportunity of amusing his brother by his first-rate mimicry of the animals of the farmyard. That he was a lovable little fellow all were agreed; but his tutors were gravely disconcerted by his outbursts of irresponsible behaviour and insolence; and they quickly found out that he would lie without the slightest provocation. His treatment of his father and mother left much to be desired in him; and while the shouting of "Wilkes and Liberty" outside his father's study might be regarded as a boyish prank, it was also symptomatic of that distressing unfilial attitude which ultimately drove him to consort with his father's political enemies and to regale them with tales and imitations of his father's shortcomings.

In 1780 he was given "an establishment" of his own, and he celebrated his freedom in the most reckless way. His uncle Cumberland quickly took him under his wing; and at Cumberland House, which was the unofficial headquarters of the political opposition, for its owner loved to boast that he was a good Whig and hater of the Establishment, "Taffy" (incidentally he resented the slur on his principality implied in the nickname!) learnt to gamble for high stakes and to take his "dram of brandy like a gentleman." (And "like a gentleman" then connoted being carried home and put to bed by lackeys!) It was uncle Cumberland who introduced his nephew to Charles James Fox.

"Taffy" was soon in a scrape. Mary Robinson's interpretation of Perdita's part in *The Winter's Tale* was the talk of the town: the prince immediately went to see the play and fell violently in love with the actress. He installed her in "an apartment," which he ordered to be furnished in the most lavish manner; and he showered presents of money and jewels upon her, procured with the cash he easily managed to raise on I.O.U.'s and notes of hand. More indiscreet was the fact that he wrote the lady "a multitude of letters," and she

threatened to publish them unless he paid her £5000. In his difficulty the young man went to his father. The king, who confessed to North that it was the first time that he had been "personally engaged in such a transaction," was greatly distressed; but he was nevertheless ready to extricate his son "out of this shameful scrape;" and provided the money demanded by the lady.

The prince was soon hopelessly in debt; and his financial position was made worse by his father's refusal to give him a larger allowance. There is little doubt that the prince's attachment to the Whigs was a clever dodge on his part to outwit the king on this question of the allowance: he was quite unconcerned that his behaviour would bring great grief to his father. When the Portland ministry agreed in June to secure a parliamentary grant of £100,000 for the prince, who was to come of age in the following August, the king bluntly told Portland that the ministers would be better employed in attending to state business than in trying "to gratify the passions of an ill-advised young man;" and taking his stand on the argument that the nation ought not to be expected to finance even the extravagant tastes of the heir to the throne, he compelled the ministry to accept his counter-proposal that the prince should receive £50,000 a year from the king's civil list (which with the revenues of the duchy of Cornwall would provide him with an annual income of £62,000) and that parliament should be asked to vote £50,000 to liquidate his debts. Naturally, the king's victory widened the breach between him and his son; and the prince's first vote in the Lords, where he took his seat in November, was cast for "dear Charles'" India Bill, of which, as every one knew, the king disapproved.

George III. was certainly a rather "trying" parent; but no excuse can be found for the gross extravagances of which the prince was guilty after he came of age; and his reckless squandering of money which came out of the pockets of his father's subjects brands him as a thoroughly irresponsible and selfish young man. His father allowed him to set up house in Carlton House, where the Dowager Princess Augusta had lived for so many years; and within a year vast sums were spent on improvements and furniture. "Taffy" meant to be *the* young man about town: he patronised the ring; spent £30,000 on his racing stud; attended the theatre regularly; and staged the costliest entertainments for his Whig friends. By the end of 1784 he was in debt to the tune of £160,000; and the extent of his liabilities can be gauged from the fact that two years later he tried in vain to persuade Pitt to secure for him a parliamentary vote of a quarter of a million to satisfy his creditors. There was something pathetically childish, too, about the methods which he employed to make his father help him. He gave out that owing to parental niggardliness he would in the future be forced to live on £22,000 a year, because £40,000 a year would be set aside for his creditors; and with a great deal of

show he put up for sale his racehorses and closed Carlton House. His efforts at retrenchment would have been more genuinely appreciated but for the fact that the deficiency in his income was made good by the most shameless sponging on his Whig friends; and it was probably as a measure of self-defence that they decided at last to go to parliament for help.

This decision brought prominently before the public eye another of the prince's indiscretions. Towards the end of 1784 he met Mrs Fitzherbert, who was six years his senior, a Catholic, and had buried two husbands; and succumbing to his fatal habit of falling in love at the first sight of an attractive face he at once pestered the widow with his attentions. She would not take him seriously, and he was so put out by her repeated rejection of his proposals (and at this stage in the *affaire* it is unlikely that the idea of a marriage entered his mind) that he deliberately stabbed himself (taking good care that he suffered little hurt in the process) to win her sympathy. But this discreditable manœuvre failed to move her; and to escape his importunities she went on the Continent. The prince was distraught. Every day couriers carried to her letters couched in the most endearing terms; and had not his father prevented him he would have gone after her. There was only one way of winning her—an offer of marriage; and this was made, although his friend Fox warned him that the result of his folly might be exclusion from the succession according to the terms of the Act of Settlement. Mrs Fitzherbert returned to England, and in December 1785 they were "married" by a Church of England parson in the drawing-room of her house in Park Street: the witnesses were her brother and uncle.

Whatever interpretation might be placed on the ceremony by the law of God, by the law of England it was plainly illegal. The Royal Marriage Act stipulated that no member of the royal family under the age of twenty-five could contract a legal marriage without the king's consent; and after that age parliamentary approval was necessary. The prince's Whig friends, after the secret leaked out, maintained that Mrs Fitzherbert was under no delusions as to her true position—a mistress. "She knew it to be invalid in law," said Holland, quoting one of her friends; "she thought it nonsense and told the prince so." It probably appealed to his sense of the dramatic that they should pledge themselves man and wife in the sight of God, when in the sight of man that privilege was denied them: the arrangement was at least a convenient one in that it could be broken without any legal difficulties. That they lived together openly after the ceremony, and that Mrs Fitzherbert was treated as the mistress of his household, signified nothing in an age whose conventions permitted a gentleman to keep as many mistresses as his pocket could support.

However, when the prince's friends moved in parliament for assistance to enable him to meet the demands of his creditors, Rolle, who was one of the

members for Devon, made a curious speech in which he hinted that a " marriage " had been contracted, and then went on to suggest that the " rumours " called for a close inquiry. Fox protested that the time of the House ought not to be taken up by inquiries into the idle tales of gossips, and made no attempt to hide from the members that his protest was made on the prince's instructions. That the prince had wilfully deceived his friend is certain. Mrs Fitzherbert was furiously angry at Fox's repudiation of the " marriage " in parliament : he had, she said, made her no better than a common " street-walker." The prince calmed her with the explanation that " dear Charles " had " exceeded his instructions ! " For more than a year Fox refused to speak to him. The upshot of these parliamentary proceedings was that £160,000 was voted to pay the prince's debts, £20,000 to complete " the decorations " at Carlton House, and his income was to be increased by £10,000 a year. He professed great gratitude, and promised to mend his ways.

That gratitude took a strange form in the winter of 1788–89 when, owing to the mental derangement of his father, the government was compelled to make arrangements for a regency. It was quite natural that as heir to the throne he should act for his father : it was equally natural that, in view of his unstable character and reckless behaviour, Pitt should take steps to limit his powers. The prince dashed up from Brighton, which since 1782 he had made his special resort ; and displayed the utmost callousness at Windsor where his father lay ill, bullying his mother and, so it was said, taking his friends to gaze upon the ravings of his demented father. Some of them urged him to seize control of the government by means of a *coup d'état* ; but that plan was quickly dropped ; and his efforts were thereupon directed to the canvassing of votes to defeat Pitt's proposals. Much to his dismay his father recovered before he had tasted the power he so much desired ; and at the great service of thanksgiving for the king's recovery held in St Paul's in April 1789 he behaved in a most unseemly way, apparently because he was irritated by the coldness of his reception in the streets as he drove to the service.

The millstone of debt still hung round his neck, although his father's illness enabled him to raise new loans in view of the likelihood of his accession ; and it was about this time that he engaged in a financial transaction which had every appearance of a cleverly conceived fraud. It was proposed to float a loan of £350,000 on the security of the prince-bishopric of Osnabrück ; and a London banker was employed to receive subscriptions and pay the advertised dividend of 6 per cent. Foreigners were the chief subscribers, and until about 1792 interest was paid ; but when the time came for the redemption of the bonds the prince's agent repudiated liability ; and those foreign subscribers who came to England to claim their dues found themselve hurtled out of the country as " undesirable aliens."

after Hoppner.

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GEORGE IV.

The prince was the centre of another unpleasant scandal in 1791. On 20th October his horse "Escape," with Sam Chiffney up, started as a hot favourite in a race at Newmarket, but was badly beaten: on the following day the same horse won handsomely against horses which had raced the previous day; and when it was said that both owner and jockey had made "comfortable fortunes" at the very much improved odds there was the inevitable suspicion of unsportsmanlike behaviour. "If you suffer Chiffney to ride your horses no gentleman will start against you," one of the stewards warned the prince after the race. There was an inquiry, but nothing could be proved against the jockey; and the prince's friends persisted that he was quite innocent of the suspicions against him. For many years afterwards he paid Chiffney £200 a year: his enemies referred to the payment as "hush-money;" his friends stoutly maintained that it was an act of generosity to a much-wronged man. Anyhow he never went to Newmarket meetings again, and gave up racing until the last few years of his life.

About this time occurred the first signs of a breach between the prince and some of his Whig friends. He could not subscribe to the applause raised by Fox and others at the successes of the French revolutionaries; and he did not hesitate to condemn their behaviour. On the other hand he had a poor opinion of Burke, and thought the *Reflections on the French Revolution* nonsense; and he continued to pose as a man of radical views.

Money was his chief interest. By 1793 he owed £400,000: there were bailiffs in his houses; and disgruntled creditors lampooned him and his friends. Marriage offered an escape from penury. For long enough his father had made it clear that he would assist him to met his debts once he entered "into a more creditable line of life by marrying:" for long enough he protested that he would never marry, having "settled it with Frederick." But Frederick had not produced an heir: the other royal brothers were with one exception "implicated" with mistresses. Not that the prince for a moment considered the provision of an heir his duty: he was more concerned with the financial settlement which would accompany his marriage.

In the summer of 1794 he promised the king to break with Mrs Fitzherbert, and then announced that he could think of no more fitting bride than the Duke of Brunswick's daughter Caroline. She was a good-looking girl, and the prince was charmed with the portraits of her: the official envoy who went to Brunswick, however, quickly discovered that she was reputed to be flighty; and he was appalled by her aversion from washing and her soiled linen. But the marriage was politically a desirable one; and what was most important the prince himself was particularly eager that it should take place without undue delay. Caroline arrived in London on 5th April: at her reception the prince formally kissed her, but he was so taken aback by her appearance that he had to call for a dram of brandy, which he gulped down in a corner of the room. The shock was not

one-sided: Caroline confessed afterwards to her attendants that she found her future husband "very fat." The marriage was solemnised on the 8th. The prince "looked like death and full of confusion;" and it was malevolently said that the court announcement of his being supported by his two brothers could be taken literally owing to the amount of cherry brandy which he had taken.

The nation, faced with a costly war, stood aghast at the revelations which were made in parliament when at the end of April and during May the prince's financial position was under discussion. It was announced that he now owed his creditors £639,890; and there were angry protests both within and without parliament when Pitt proposed to use public funds for the liquidation of these debts. Pitt's scheme amounted to this: the prince's normal annual income should be fixed at about £140,000 a year; a lump sum of £52,000 should be voted to meet outstanding charges on Carlton House and to provide new jewels; and £25,000 a year should be set aside to meet his creditor's demands. A commission was to be set up, under the chairmanship of the speaker, to make arrangements with the creditors and to manage the liquidation of the debts. Much to the prince's annoyance it was the Whig Grey who moved that the annual income should be limited to £100,000; and the proposition was well supported. But Pitt had his way and the creditors were profoundly dissatisfied with his scheme. The prince never forgave Grey for his part in the proceedings: it widened the breach between him and his former Whig friends.

Nowadays it is an accepted rule in the royal household that the monarch's sons, and particularly the heir to the throne, should share in the arduous responsibilities of kingship. Thinking in terms of present-day usage some of George IV.'s apologists have roundly condemned his father for keeping his eldest son in the background. But was the prince a fit person to undertake such responsibilities? George III. was essentially a family man; and he would have been inordinately proud of an eldest son who was able to play the part of the heir to the throne with decorum and dignity. But the ugly truth—and none knew it better than the poor king—was that the prince would never have filled the part. His charm of manner was certainly a recommendation; but it was cancelled by his lack of good faith and stability; and there is little doubt that he would have used state employment to humiliate his father and embarrass his ministers. Blind to his own shortcomings, the prince professed to find his isolation unbearable; and he was loud in his demands to be allowed to occupy a prominent place in the affairs of the kingdom over which one day he would rule. Thus in 1797 he approached Pitt with the view to obtaining the viceroyalty of Ireland; but the Prime Minister was hardly likely to establish in Dublin Castle one who at any moment might create a first-rate political sensation in a country whose affairs called for firm and tactful handling; and consequently he never even bothered to acquaint the king of the prince's request.

Low though the moral standards of the age were, the relations of the prince and his wife were soon a public scandal. The prince boasted that only on his wedding night had he shared the princess's bed: the princess was later to declare that he was practically dead drunk the whole of the time. A daughter was born in January 1796: three months later the prince informed his wife that he wished to separate from her; and to avoid meeting her he went to live at Brighton and Windsor. In the autumn the princess took up residence in the Old Rectory in Charlton near Blackheath: the prince at once returned to Carlton House, and brought Mrs Fitzherbert with him. His unpopularity in the country, due to a widespread belief that his marriage was planned merely to obtain the means to meet his debts, compelled him to lead a retired life; and he consoled himself by collecting works of art and generally posing as a patron of culture.

In the political crisis which arose out of Pitt's desire to relieve the Irish Catholics, the prince, under the influence of Moira, openly espoused the Catholic cause; and once again father and son were in conflict. The king's breakdown raised the old question of a regency; and to Pitt's amazement the prince readily agreed to accept the limitations imposed on the regent in the measure adopted in 1789. But again he was to be denied the opportunity of exercising kingly power: his father's recovery was more rapid than was at first anticipated. One of the prince's grievances was that his father had taken the revenue from the duchy of Cornwall during his minority; and exclusive of interest it amounted to about £240,000. His friends in parliament constantly made references to this, and protested that the prince ought to receive either the amount in full or adequate compensation. Thus, when the question of his debts—and, as Pitt observed, "those debts have been contracted in the teeth of the last Act of Parliament and in breach of positive promises"—was again raised, Addington secured the increase of the prince's income by a further £8000 a year (1801); and to meet the demand of the minority with regard to the revenue from the duchy of Cornwall, parliament was induced to grant the prince £60,000 for three years (1803).

Napoleon's projected invasion of England in 1803 put everyone on his mettle; and young and old, rich and poor, hastened to enrol themselves to meet the invaders. Early in August the prince wrote to his father, Addington, and his brother York, who was the commander-in-chief, to ask for military employment. "In a moment of unexampled difficulty and danger," he said, it was his duty to come forward: as he had "everything to lose by defeat" he felt that he ought to be allowed "to share in the glory of victory;" and he pointed to the humiliation which he suffered from the fact that "I, who am Prince of Wales, am to remain Colonel of Dragoons," whereas "the younger branches of my family are either generals or lieutenant-generals." The letters were cleverly composed, and were the work of Philip Francis, the supposed *Junius*. The king may have known this, and it may account for his curt reply.

The prince was reminded that his previous request for military employment had been turned down; and had he referred to the previous correspondence he would have found the king's reason, that "military command was incompatible with the situation of the Prince of Wales." "Should the implacable enemy so far succeed as to land," continued the king, "you will have an opportunity of showing your zeal at the head of your regiment. It will be the duty of every man to stand forth on such an occasion."

It was characteristic of the prince that when put out or thwarted he should resort to the sort of behaviour which is usually associated with the nursery. On his father's refusal to make him a general he published the correspondence which had passed between him, his father, his brother York, and Addington. This was more than the poor king, his health already seriously impaired by a recent chill, could stand; and the consequence was another of those mental attacks which made him quite unable to perform his kingly duties. The prince's behaviour on his father's birthday (4th June) intensified the bad feeling: while all the other members of the family attended the drawing-room reception which was held to mark the occasion, the prince deliberately stayed away, and paraded about town to emphasise his absence. The curious thing is that he seems to have been quite oblivious of the fact that his studied insults against his father and mother were roundly condemned, except by a small section of the Whigs.

Even his best friends, Moira and Tierney, recognised the extent of the political damage suffered by the Whigs on account of this estrangement of father and son, and they worked hard to bring about a reconciliation. The prince was persuaded to write to his mother and sisters, begging them to induce the king to grant him an interview. The letter was most admirably phrased. "Were this (interview) allowed me," wrote the prince, "I should fly to throw myself at the king's feet, and offer him the testimony of my ever-unvarying attachment. I have long grieved that misrepresentations have estranged His Majesty's mind from me, and the most anxious wish of my heart is for the opportunity of dispelling that coldness. Every consideration renders this distance most severely painful. My first object is the gratification of the feelings of affection, leaving all else to the spontaneous dictates of my father's kindness; and, if any public view can mingle with this sentiment, it is the incalculable importance to His Majesty and the country of the whole Royal Family appearing united in a moment so awful as the present."

The king doubted his son's sincerity. To him he was the "publisher of my letters;" and he found it hard to forget the absence from his birthday celebrations. It was Eldon who persuaded him to grant the interview; and Pitt, who had now returned to office, used his influence in the same direction. Solely because they represented to him that it was in the public interest to become

reconciled with his son, the king agreed to the proposed interview. But Eldon was clearly told that there were to be conditions: the king would see the prince "provided no explanation or excuses are attempted to be made by the Prince of Wales, but that it is merely to be a visit of civility; as any retrospect could but oblige the king to utter truths which, instead of healing, must widen the present breach." However, on the day appointed for the reconciliation interview, the prince sent to say that he was ill. His father expressed his sorrow "at his being unwell;" and commanded Eldon to inform the prince that he would be received at court when the king returned from his visit to Weymouth.

Fox's inclusion in the ministry formed by Grenville — known as "The Ministry of All the Talents"—gave the prince a great deal of satisfaction. Although he and "dear Charles" had drifted apart in recent years, he was not forgetful of the days when his advice was widely sought by Whig leaders; and he hoped that with their advent to power even in the restricted form of a ministry "of all the talents" he would be rehabilitated in their councils. But times had changed since the day when Fox had acclaimed the French Revolution one of the greatest boons in the history of mankind; and the Whig leaders were not disposed to jeopardise their political future by allowing their party to be dominated by a rake who was the best hated man in the kingdom. One of the first tasks which confronted the new ministry was an examination of the sordid accusations which the prince allowed to be made against his wife.

The prince and his father went through a formal reconciliation in November 1804, "care" being "taken on all sides to avoid all subjects of altercation and explanation;" and a month later they discussed the future of the prince's little daughter. The old king was particularly anxious that her education should be properly attended to; and the prince agreed to the proposals which his father made. But when he found that his wife was to have freer access to her daughter than had been the case in the past, he repudiated his father's plans, and a good deal of bickering resulted. The king, however, had his way: there is little doubt that the prince used the scandal against his wife as a means of scoring off his father. There was a rumour that the Princess of Wales had given birth to a child: if that were true, then she was not a fit person to be in any way connected with her daughter. The prince urged his father and the ministers to conduct an inquiry; and four commissioners were thereupon appointed to hold what was popularly called "The Delicate Investigation." They discovered that the tale of an illegitimate child was quite without foundation; but it had to be admitted that the princess had been guilty of frequent indiscretions; and the king was compelled to reprimand her. Naturally she had her champions; and the chief of them was Spencer Perceval. He penned the excellent replies which she sent to the king's letters (and they were ultimately published); and brought behind her cause a

considerable weight of Tory opinion. Thus the prince was ignored by his former Whig friends, and scorned by the Tories. Fox's death in the same year (1806) completed his isolation; and soon afterwards he found it convenient to admit that he was no longer "a party man."

Grenville and Grey, who took Fox's place as leaders of a strong section of the Whig party, were blamed for making it appear as though the prince's advice was not desired. Soon after Fox's death he wrote to the former to say that "if upon any occasion, public or private, you wish me in town, I will readily obey your summons;" and he was considerably aggrieved when, in the crisis of 1807 over the Catholic question, they refrained from consulting him. To his friend Moira he wrote: "Neither was my advice asked when it might have been of use in the commencement of the discussion, nor my interposition desired when it might possibly have prevented ultimate mischief." It served to confirm him in his "original purpose sincerely professed in my own mind upon the death of poor Fox—to cease to be a party man." The behaviour of Grenville and Grey was undoubtedly actuated by the prince's closer connection with the Tories. This was the outcome of his friendship with Lady Hertford, the wife of the Marquis of Hertford; and although she was nearly old enough to be his mother, intimacy was supposed to have taken place between them.

In the autumn of 1810 George III. was afflicted with another attack of insanity: it was destined to leave him a hopeless lunatic for the remainder of his life. Perceval was prime minister at the time; and he resolved that Pitt's regency plan of 1789 should become the model of any regency proposals which it would be his duty to introduce. As soon as the prince learnt what the ministerial plans were (they were communicated to him by Perceval) he summoned his brothers to Carlton House, and persuaded them to sign a protest against the restrictions on the ground that they were contrary to those "principles which seated our family upon the throne of these realms." The eccentric brother Sussex, who loved to pose as a radical and to hear his voice in the Lords, undertook to speak against the proposals when they came before parliament. Perceval, however, went calmly on; and despite his unstable parliamentary position carried his point that the restrictions of 1789 were to remain in force for one year, after which the regent's position would be similar to that of the king. Perceval's bill became law on 5th February 1811.

In the meantime, however, the prince was in touch with Grenville and Grey, and went so far as to instruct them to frame his reply to the address which would be given when he assumed the regency. The prince did not like their efforts, and asked Moira and Sheridan to revise the draft reply. This was more than the proud Whig lords could stand: they made a spirited protest against "their humble endeavours" being submitted to "another person."

From their point of view this protest was a fatal mistake: the prince disliked lectures; and urged by Lady Hertford, and warned by his mother that a change of government would have a disastrous effect upon his father's health,[1] he retained Perceval in power.

The regent's first act was to make himself a field-marshal. Resplendent in a specially designed uniform, he presided over a magnificent fête at Carlton House to celebrate his accession to power (June). Everything was done on a scale "worthy of a prince:" the breaking with Mrs. Fitzherbert was worthy of this particular prince, for she was denied any special precedence at the laden tables, and was publicly ignored. Many people thought that the celebrations were in bad taste in view of the king's illness: the poor shouted curses upon a regent who could waste the public money in such a shameless way when his subjects were weighed down with taxes and women and children cried out for food.

The relations of regent and ministers were strictly formal. Perceval's championship of the cause of the Princess of Wales was never forgotten: his action on the question of a vote to meet the additional expenses of the regency, when he rejected the regent's demand for £150,000 and asked parliament only for £100,000, increased the bad feeling. A certain section of the Whigs believed that at the expiration of the period of the "restricted regency" Perceval would be dismissed, and his place bestowed upon a member of their own party. But they had underestimated the political sagacity of the regent. He was perhaps only too painfully aware of those "dreadful personal animosities" which divided the party: he saw that jealousy and distrust characterised its councils. Would the country accept Whig policy? The party stood for peace with France, emancipation of the Catholics, parliamentary reform. The tide in Spain and Portugal had turned against the French, and the country demanded that Wellington should be well supported by the home government; and relief for the Catholics and parliamentary reform were questions which could only provoke the bitterest controversy. Shrewdly the regent recognised that it would be an act of sheer madness to allow purely domestic matters to undermine the power of a nation engaged in a death struggle with an implacable enemy.

At the same time he would have welcomed a change of leadership, and he courted Wellesley in the hope that the marquis might eventually be persuaded to take Perceval's place. But Wellesley resigned from the ministry when the Catholic question was raised in parliament in January 1812; and that avenue of escape was closed to the regent. Curiously enough his next move was reminiscent of his father's ideal of a government in which were to be included the best men of all parties; but Grenville and Grey would not

[1] George III. was as yet able to take an interest in state business.

co-operate; and he was driven into the arms of the Tories—which meant that Perceval would retain the leadership. In May, however, the assassination of Perceval by the crazed Bellingham resulted in a return of the crisis.

The regent's first thought was towards the line of least resistance; and he asked the ministers if they would serve under a leader whom he would nominate from among them. This suggestion did not meet with universal approval: some of the ministers urged him to approach either Wellesley and Canning or Grenville and Grey. Grenville and Grey had completely lost the his confidence; and, for their part, they no longer trusted him. Thus ministerial salvation was not to be looked for in that direction. Wellesley, on the other hand, was ready to lead a ministry provided that he would be allowed to bring in a measure of Catholic emancipation; and knowing that the regent had in the previous year canvassed his friends to oppose relief for the Catholics, he asked for, and eventually obtained, assurances on the point. Wellesley's hands, however, were tied by the regent's refusal to allow him to include in the ministry members of the Whig opposition. The trouble was that Grey had mortally offended the regent in a speech made in the Lords on 19th May. He had referred to Lady Hertford as "an unseen and separate influence which lurked behind the throne;" and openly said that he would only take office when he was confident that parliament would assist him to remove "this destructive influence." The regent was in a quandary: every effort at forming a ministry was doomed to failure on one score or another. An attempt to reconcile him with Grey through the mediation of his brother York not only failed lamentably, but led to high words between the two brothers. It was Wellesley who finally persuaded him to sink his differences with the two Whig leaders; and in due course Grey was asked to form a government. But the negotiations broke down owing to the regent's insistence that Canning, Erskine, and Moira should be in the cabinet, and his refusal to dismiss certain members of the household—the Hertford connection. The deadlock was ended when Liverpool managed to form a Tory ministry, which officially took office on 9th June.

The government's reactionary policy, the poor's exasperation at a costly war, the princess's attempt to gain greater influence with her daughter, all served to increase the unpopularity of the regent; and the Whigs, bitterly resentful because he had refused them office on their own terms, used every means at their disposal to make his position more difficult. Early in 1813 his daughter "rebelled:" it was suspected that her behaviour was encouraged by her mother. Championed now by Brougham and Whitbread, the Princess of Wales demanded a more frequent access to her daughter: her letter was returned unopened by Liverpool at the regent's request. On 10th February, with an earlier letter on the same topic, it appeared in *The Morning Chronicle*;

and there was the usual reaction in favour of "the much-wronged princess." The privy council, however, came to the regent's rescue: it examined again some of the principal documents submitted at the time of "The Delicate Investigation," and announced that the regulating of the mother's access to her daughter was justified.

There was pageantry in plenty during the early summer of 1814. First, it fell to the regent's lot to speed on his way to the kingdom over which his ancestors had ruled for generations the exiled Louis XVIII. of France. Ribald crowds roared with laughter at the sight of the

> Two round, tunbellied, thriving rakes,
> Like oxen fed on linseed cakes.

Then he entertained two distinguished allies—the Emperor Alexander of Russia and the King of Prussia. His management of the entertainments was perfect: his guests' reception of his hospitality left much to be desired. Alexander made no secret of his contempt for his princely host: he embarrassed him considerably by threatening to pay a courtesy call on the Princess of Wales; and only with the greatest difficulty did the Russian ambassador dissuade him from doing so. Finally came Wellington, the hero of the Peninsular: he was most graciously received by the regent, who staged a magnificent fête in his honour at Carlton House.

Again his own daughter turned against him. It had been decided that she should marry the Prince of Orange, who has been described as "tipsy and rather stupid;" but she was a high-spirited girl; and without mentioning the matter to her father she broke off her engagement. "Could a Prussian corporal have behaved worse?" asked one of his Whig enemies when it was told how he reprimanded her and dismissed her attendants. His testiness is at least understandable: she had insulted the ruling house of a friendly state; and (this probably weighed more heavily with her father) she was known to be much attracted by young Devonshire—and might marry him. Fairness compels the admission that in his strange way the regent was obviously fond of his daughter: he certainly left her free to choose her husband, the handsome Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, who was soon one of the most popular men in the country. Her tragic death in childbed in November 1817 was a great grief to both father and husband: nevertheless, people said that it was a judgment on the former for the sinfulness of his life.

The Whigs pursued him relentlessly. Tierney's revelations into his extravagances since becoming regent inflamed the worst passions in a people impoverished by a protracted war. They booed and hissed him; they threw things at him as he appeared in the streets; and the foulest epithets were chalked on walls and hoardings. There was some peace to be had at Brighton, where his attention

was claimed by the monstrous Oriental edifice built for him; but his ministers insisted that he must not be absent from the capital for too long periods; and when he obeyed their behests he found it necessary to surround himself with Life Guards and Dragoons for fear of violence from the people. His architectural projects were a diversion which benefited his people, though they saw in them nothing but proof of his spendthrift ways; and his munificence in bricks and mortar is commemorated in Regent Street and Regent Park.

Paradoxically it was reserved for this, the most spectacular of the heirs to the throne, to become little better than a figure-head of a king. His father's death on 29th January 1830 found him fast in bed with inflammation of the lungs; and it required the letting of no less than 130 ounces of blood to prevent suffocation. Yet on recovery his first thought was how further to slight the woman who was now legally queen. He demanded that her name should be omitted from the prayers for the royal family in the Prayer Book. Archbishop Sutton of Canterbury demurred; but the king was insistent; and his arguments were clinched with the remark that "if she was fit to be introduced as queen to God, she was fit to be so introduced to men." For some time past the king had been actively engaged in collecting evidence against Caroline; and there is not a shadow of doubt that personally he believed that she had been guilty of an adulterous relationship with one of her suite, an obscure Milanese named Pergami or Bergami. Prominent lawyers advised that there were ample grounds for a divorce; and the king hoped that the ministry would introduce a bill of divorcement into parliament. But few of the ministers liked the business; and the king was told that they could not introduce such a bill until the case had been argued in the usual way in the courts.

But Brougham meant to make George IV. feel the sting of the Whig lash; and the queen was persuaded to return to England to face the inquiry. Her reception at Dover and along the route to London at once demonstrated the sympathies of the crowd; and during the summer the country was treated to a feast of sordid details connected with her life since she had gone on the continent in 1814. The issue was not one between innocence and guilt: it was a purely party matter. A good Whig like Ellenborough summed up the feelings of many of his party when he said in the Lords that "the Queen of England was the last woman in the country which a man of honour would wish his wife to resemble, or the father of a family would recommend as an example to his daughters." But Ellenborough and his Whig friends voted against the government bill to deprive her of her rights and to dissolve her marriage with the king: the Whig attitude was now a deliberate tilt against monarchy.

The bill was dropped; but it was too late, for the reputation of king and ministers had suffered irreparable hurt; and popular resentment against them flared up with renewed heat when in the following year the queen was refused

admission to the coronation service. In the theatre and streets the king was greeted with "Where's your wife, Georgie?;" and as he drove to the abbey on coronation day (19th July 1821) there were ugly scenes. Never was a coronation conducted in more costly fashion; and that in itself aroused the anger of men and women who in the depression following a great war could find neither work nor had money for food.

Queen Victoria's recollection of her uncle was that he was "large and gouty, but with a wonderful dignity and charm of manners." Soon after the coronation he commenced a progress of his possessions. Ireland was the first to be visited; and his free-and-easy manner won all hearts. The round of festivities arranged by the citizens of Dublin was somewhat curtailed on account of the queen's death on 7th August 1821; and the Irish would have asked for nothing better than that he would carry out his jocular threat to send the viceroy to be king in England while he performed the viceregal duties in Ireland. Hanover was next visited: the Hanoverians had not seen their elector since George II.'s day. On the way he was escorted by Wellington around the battlefield of Waterloo, and gave orders that one of the shot-scarred trees should be cut down for a chair to be made out of it: the chair was to placed in Carlton House, and inscribed with the words *Georgio Augusto Europæ Liberatori.* The Hanoverians gave him a rousing reception and they were pleasantly surprised at the fluency of his German. The visit to Scotland took place during the summer of 1822, and was made by sea from London to Leith. His appearance in a kilt of Stuart tartan caused a good deal of amusement among the people of Edinburgh; but the king returned to England firmly convinced that the Scots "are a nation of gentlemen;" and his "wonderful dignity and charm of manners" softened some of the animosities which lurked in the northern kingdom since the ill-fated "Forty-five."

Virtually those visits marked the end of his public appearances. He had grown tremendously fat, and was conscious of his Falstaffian appearance; and he preferred to spend his time with his mistress Lady Conyngham at Brighton or Windsor. He had complete confidence in his ministers, except that he was somewhat mistrustful of Canning; and it took some time to persuade him of the wisdom of recognising that new world which the brilliant Foreign Secretary said he called into existence to redress the balance of the old (the Spanish-American republics). One thought tormented him—the old question of relief for the Catholics. Once he would have welcomed the concession, and had even told Pitt that he would support a measure of Catholic emancipation; but those days were far away; and now he was as resolutely opposed to it as the most bigoted Protestant parson.

But it was a question which demanded an answer, though George himself hoped to shelve it; and when Liverpool's resignation in 1827 called for a ministerial reconstruction he stifled his dislike of Canning and offered him the

premiership solely because he believed he would not raise the emancipation question. Canning's death in August of that year brought him again face to face with the one thing he wished to avoid; and his anxiety affected his health. Goderich's ministry was a makeshift; and in January 1828 Wellington took office. The Clare Election brought matters to a head, although the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts was meant to quieten Catholic demands. Daniel O'Connell's election for County Clare compelled Wellington to face facts: it was followed by a warning from Anglesey, who was on the spot in Dublin, that a refusal to recognise the Catholic claims would provoke civil war in Ireland. The very thought of civil war was abhorrent to Wellington; and he was slowly won round to the view that a measure of relief for the Catholics was a necessity. The king, however, was as obstinate as his father had been in Pitt's day: he would die, he said, rather than yield. His incapacity—he was no longer able to walk and had to be carried everywhere—was a handicap, but he was nevertheless able to embarrass his ministers by stiffening the opposition to emancipation; and Peel's defeat at Oxford gave him the greatest pleasure.

Wellington's mind was made up. He placed before the king a memorandum in which it was clearly stated that the ministry would sponsor a bill for the relief of the Catholics: he insisted that the king should sign that memorandum. Once he attempted to go back on his pledged word; but the duke bluntly reminded him that he and the ministers would not tolerate such duplicity; and after long argument, punctuated by threats of abdication, he yielded. In April 1829 the Roman Catholic Emancipation Bill received the royal assent.

George was never the same man after Wellington's victory. As early as January 1829 his physicians feared that his anxiety over the Catholic relief proposals would unhinge his mind; and in the last year of his life he was troubled with the strange fancies of having won Waterloo and ridden a Goodwood winner. The dropsy caused him intense pain: he could not lie down, and he suffered from sleeplessness. By April 1830 the royal physicians deemed it advisable to issue bulletins: it was reported by those who were permitted to see him that he was so swollen as to resemble a "feather bed." One day at the end of May his attendants placed a Bible at his side and summoned Dr Sumner of Winchester to be at hand to give him the consolation of the Church. These acts brought home to him the imminence of death; and although all his life men thought him a coward he now displayed a fine fortitude when his physician told him that he could not live long. In the early hours of the morning of 26th June a fit of coughing caused him to break a blood-vessel in his stomach, and clasping his physician's hand he murmured, "Boy, this is death." He was buried in St George's Chapel at Windsor.

The supreme tragedy of George IV.'s life was that in his search for popularity he made himself the best hated man in the kingdom. His whole life is epito-

mised in these words: "A bad son, a bad husband, a bad father, a bad subject, a bad monarch, and a bad friend." "What eye has wept for him? what heart has heaved one throb of unmercenary sorrow?" asked the leader writer of *The Times* on the day after his death; and the words echoed the sentiments of the majority of Britishers.

"I DESIRE HE may be received without the smallest marks of parade. I trust the admiral will order him immediately on board. . . . The young man goes as a sailor, and as such, I add again, no marks of distinction are to be shown unto him; they would destroy my whole plan."

Such were George III.'s instructions to Sir Samuel Hood, the dockyard commissioner at Portsmouth, when in June 1779 the young prince William Henry, accompanied by his tutor, the Reverend H. W. Majendie (later to hold the bishoprics of Chester and Bangor), reported for service on board H.M.S. *Prince George*, the flagship of that incomparable sailor Captain Robert Digby. The little prince was on the eve of his fourteenth birthday: he was a happy, red-faced little fellow, and was a great favourite with his father and mother. Nothing pleased him more than his father's decision to let him qualify for a career in "that glorious profession" of the British Navy; and he was soon at home in the rather squalid quarters shared by the "middies" on an eighteenth-century man-o'-war.

Once aboard, his young companions asked him his name; and his reply was characteristic of the easy familiarity which he displayed to the end of his life. "I am entered as Prince William Henry," he said, "but my father's name is Guelph, and therefore, if you please, you may call me William Guelph, for I am nothing more than a sailor like yourselves." His life differed little from that of these happy-go-lucky young "middies:" he joined in their pranks, fought with them, and generally had a boisterous time. In addition to his ordinary duties he was compelled each day to study the classics with the tutor Majendie; and that was probably the most irksome of the day's excitements. The prince never liked reading, though he was often in later life to astonish his hearers by his knowledge of history; and he preferred the practical instruction which was given by the senior officers.

The prince soon had a taste of active service. France and Spain were now allies of the revolted American colonists; and in the summer of 1779 their men-o'-war came into the Channel to prepare the way for an invasion of England. A rearguard action was fought—a somewhat half-hearted affair which gave rise to a good deal of criticism. During the winter the prince's ship sailed with Rodney to relieve Gibraltar, and was present at the fight against the Spaniards off Cape St Vincent. A story current at the time relates how the captured Spanish admiral, when he learnt that a royal prince was made to

perform the ordinary duties of a "middy," exclaimed: "Well does Great Britain merit the empire of the sea, when the humblest stations in her navy are supported by princes of the blood."

The country went wild with delight when Rodney and the prince came to London in 1780: the fruits of the victory off St Vincent were sweetened by the knowledge that the king's son had fought alongside his father's humbler subjects. The boy presented the king with the flag of the captured Spanish admiral, and with the aid of a plan drawn by himself explained the dispositions at "the Rock." George III. was naturally very proud of his sailor son: he took him to Drury Lane to see *The Tempest*; and beamed with delight at the rousing reception which the boy received from the pit and gallery.

For the next eighteen months H.M.S. *Prince George* was in home waters, and the prince was frequently ashore. Like all sailors he made the most of his shore leaves; and his father was greatly troubled by the stories of his wild exploits. Actually, the boy seems to have been singularly free from vice: it is true that he got drunk, and had a girl; but his behaviour was not worse than that of his youthful companions; and he was as pleased as Punch when his ship was ordered to Gibraltar with stores for the garrison. In September 1781 he crossed the north Atlantic to New York; and in the following spring was nearly captured by Washington's agents. In April he was transferred to H.M.S. *Barfleur*, Sir Samuel Hood's flagship, and in the autumn went into West Indian waters.

It was probably during his stay at New York that the prince came in contact with Captain Horatio Nelson of H.M.S. *Albemarle*; and they renewed their acquaintance later in the West Indies. The future victor of Trafalgar quickly recognised the young man's naval worth: there is no ground for supposing that his opinion was determined by a desire to curry favour in the eyes of the young prince. "He is a seaman, which you could hardly suppose," wrote Nelson. "He will be a disciplinarian, and a strong one. He says he is determined every person shall serve his time before they shall be provided for, as he is obliged to serve his. . . . With the best temper and great good sense, he cannot fail of being pleasing to everyone." Nelson accompanied the prince when he went on H.M.S. *Fortunée* to Havana, where he was given a royal reception.

The war ended, and ships were paid off. Prince William on reaching England in June 1783 found that his father had arranged for him to accompany his elder brother Frederick on a grand tour in Germany and Italy. From a parental point of view the grand tour was not a success: the brothers were soon involved in all sorts of scrapes; and when they returned home in 1785 the king lost no time in sending William back to sea. He passed his lieutenant's examination, and was posted to H.M.S. *Hebe*: she was commanded by Captain Edward

Thornborough, who "as a practical seaman" was said to have "few rivals and certainly no superior." In the spring of 1786 the prince realised the ambition of every young officer afloat—an independent command; and his ship was H.M.S. *Pegasus*, one of the cleanest sailing frigates in commission. He was ordered to join the West Indian station, where he now found himself under Nelson's command. They became boon companions; and when Nelson married Mrs Nisbet the prince acted as best man.

Nelson saw no reason to change the good opinion which he had already formed of the young captain. "He has his foibles as well as private men," he admitted; "but they are far over-balanced by his virtues. In his professional line he is superior to nearly two-thirds, I am sure, of the list; and in attention to orders and respect to his superior officers I hardly know his equal." Nevertheless, there was trouble aboard the prince's ship; and the cause of it was the behaviour of his first-lieutenant. On which side justice lay it is now difficult to say. The first-lieutenant maintained that the prince was quite unfitted to command a ship: on the other hand, Nelson and others believed H.M.S. *Pegasus* to be "one of the best disciplined ships" in the navy. This view is borne out by the prince's order book: it is evident that he meant to make his ship the smartest in the service; and he was probably a hard taskmaster.

When Nelson left the West Indian station, however, the prince gave way to a serious act of insubordination. He took his ship without orders to Canada; and when, as punishment for his disobedience, the admiral ordered him to remain for the winter in the St Lawrence, he promptly hoisted sail and set a course for home. He was aggrieved that nothing had been done to provide him with an allowance and honours comparable to those enjoyed by his elder brother Frederick, and one of his first acts on landing in England was to allow the papers to announce that he would become a candidate for election to parliament. Whether the idea was the prince's own or was put into his head by others is not known; but it was a clever ruse to obtain a dukedom; and the king promptly created him Duke of Clarence and Earl of Munster.

For a brief moment William joined the "Carlton House opposition" to his father's government; and by his two elder brothers was initiated into the refinements of debauchery which went on there. But he found it all rather boring, and he was probably as willing, as his father was insistent for him, to return to sea; and more especially since he had been posted to H.M.S. *Andromeda*, a frigate every inch as good as the *Pegasus*. He was transferred to H.M.S. *Valiant* in 1789, and joined the fleet which was commissioned to proceed against the Spaniards, whose attitude on the question of Nootka Sound threatened war. But his career afloat was nearly over: on 27th November the *Valiant* was paid off, and on 2nd December he was gazetted rear-admiral.

There is an atmosphere of mystery surrounding this sudden termination of the prince's naval career. His record was good: he was keen and hard-working, and was well liked by all ranks. Nelson in January 1788 suspected that "a lord of the Admiralty—Gower, presumably—is hurt to see him so able after what he has said about him." The very fact that he was a son of George III. would provide him with enemies; and the time had not yet come when naval officers divorced themselves from party politics. It must not be supposed for a moment that the prince was fitted for senior rank: he might have been incapable of performing successfully the duties of a rear-admiral; but he was never one to force himself into the limelight; and as his subsequent protests against his non-employment demonstrate he would have been perfectly content to serve as a ship's captain had the government allowed him that privilege. Nor does it seem reasonable to suppose that he was withdrawn from the sea owing to the inexpediency of a member of the royal family being exposed to the dangers of naval warfare: other members of the royal family had risked their lives on their country's behalf; and the prince himself as a young boy was allowed to have a taste of fighting with Rodney.

Inactivity, therefore, drove the prince to seek the solace of a form of domesticity which was irregular from the conventional standpoint. As a boy, during one of his shore leaves, he had fallen in love with Sarah Martin, the pretty daughter of the naval commissioner at Portsmouth; and with his customary frankness he went straight to ask his mother to persuade his father to let him marry her. George III. would not contemplate such "a very unpleasant and unexpected event;" and the simple remedy was to send him back to sea. While he was under the influence of the "Carlton House opposition" he formed an association with a vulgar little creature called Polly Finch, and he set up house with her at Richmond. The fashionable world was duly scandalised; but what caused the gossiping tongues to wag more than anything else was the news that the prince lived a thoroughly respectable life, paying his bills regularly and forbidding the servants to remain out late at night. Miss Finch went; and her place was taken by the actress Dorothea Jordan, who was a homely little woman of about thirty and the mother of a number of children by a number of different fathers.

The pair were ideally happy: years later Mrs Jordan could write to a friend that "we never had for twenty years the semblance of a quarrel." Malevolent people maintained that he lived on her money. In Peter Pindar's squibs appeared the lines:

> "As Jordan's high and mighty squire
> Her playhouse profits deigns to skim;
> Some folks audaciously inquire
> If he keeps her or she keeps him."

Sir M. Archer Shee.

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The National Portrait Gallery.

WILLIAM IV.

William was quite unmoved by these sordid attacks. They lived in quiet style; and he showed the greatest affection for the many children who were born to them. There is little doubt that he would have married Mrs Jordan had he been free to do so; and the fact that his regular marriage was not marred by infidelities seems at least to indicate that he had none of the promiscuous tendencies of some of his brothers. His behaviour towards his father and mother was considerate and kindly; and although they frowned upon "the Jordan connection" they never could bring themselves to remonstrate with him for remaining with her.

Life at sea emphasised a natural independence of character. If the nation would not allow him to serve her afloat, he could at least take an interest in her affairs from his place in the Lords; and every now and then he could be relied upon to speak his mind in a manner which disconcerted his friends and infuriated his enemies. The latter called him "Silly Billy;" but he was not nearly as silly as they liked to make him out to be; and even when his utterances were characterised by a strange inconsistency they often contained what nowadays would be described as "horse sense." He spoke badly, probably because he said the first thing that came to his mind, and he delighted to preface his speeches with rambling historical retrospects, some of which had little connection with the point he wished to drive home. His most curious effort in public speaking was his condemnation of adultery in the Lords in 1800-01. He defined an adulterer as "an insidious and designing villain, who would ever be held in disgrace and abhorrence by an enlightened and civilised society." When it was recalled that he was still living openly with Mrs Jordan, and that many of the noble peers maintained their mistresses, amusement and anger filled the chamber, and his brother peers were at a loss to know whether he meant his words to be self-condemnatory or an indictment of the civilisation under which they lived. He staggered the Lords, too, when he opposed the abolition of slavery. "I assert that the promoters of the abolition are either fanatics or hypocrites, and in one of these classes I rank Mr Wilberforce." The attack on Wilberforce was unjustified, but the general observation which prefaced it was by no means wide of the mark.

Throughout his retirement he kept in close touch with old naval friends, and particularly with Nelson. The news of the victory at Trafalgar gave him great delight and satisfaction, which was soon overshadowed by a later despatch announcing Nelson's death; and the jack-tars who lined London's streets on the day of the memorial service in St Paul's felt a thrill pass through them when they saw great tears rolling down the cheeks of "the sailor prince." They knew that in him they had a friend who would, if occasion demanded, fearlessly champion their cause.

William was convinced that he would outlive his elder brothers George and

Frederick. He lived a regular life, ate sparingly, and seldom broke his rule of "four glasses of sherry wine a day." In 1811 he severed his connection with Mrs Jordan. Undoubtedly it caused him considerable pain to break with her. The reason for this decision is somewhat obscure. Unlike his elder brothers his allowance was small (about £20,000 a year), and inadequate to the demands made upon it; and he may have felt that the time had come for him to marry an heiress. He certainly made advances to a Miss Tilney Long of Ramsgate, and a Miss Wykeham of Brighton, both of whom were possessed of great fortunes; but his elder brother in his capacity as regent quickly let him know that a match with a commoner would not be agreed to; and he thereupon turned his attentions first to a Danish princess, and then to the sister of the Russian Czar. These latter approaches suggest that he now felt it his duty to produce an heir; and whatever were his faults he certainly never shrank from doing what he conceived to be his duty.

These marriage projects having failed he went over to Holland where he could take a closer view of the operations against Antwerp; and he was full of good advice for the allied officers in charge of the attack on the French. As Admiral of the Fleet, to which position he was promoted in 1811, it fell to his lot to command the naval escort for Louis XVIII. when he returned to France in 1814; and in the same year he proudly led the fleet to sea during the review by the allied sovereigns who were visiting England. It was said that one of the treats which the Russian Czar and Prussian King most enjoyed was the torrent of oaths which poured out of William's mouth when the sailors mishandled a top-gallant on his flagship!

The death of the regent's daughter made the question of the succession of great importance. Peter Pindar's malicious reference to the excitement among the princes ran thus:

> Agog are all, both old and young,
> Warm'd with desire to be prolific;
> And prompt with resolution strong,
> To fight in Hymen's war terrific.

In April 1818 it was announced that William was to marry the Princess Adelaide of Saxe-Coburg-Meiningen. Canning, in moving that parliament should increase the prince's allowance by £7000 a year and grant £3000 a year to his wife, said that the prince had entered into the marriage "not for his own private desire or gratification, but because it was pressed on him for the purpose of providing for the succession to the throne." Parliament, however, was not in a generous mood: the government's motion was defeated; and the amendment—that the prince's allowance be increased by £3000 and his wife's be fixed at a like sum—was carried. This affront was more than the prince would stand: he politely told the government that as far as he was concerned the marriage

would not take place. However, he changed his mind, and was married in July; but he refused the proffered £6000; and went off to Hanover, where "it was cheaper." He returned to England in 1820; and two years later decided to take the allowance—and the arrears.

Disparity in years—William was in his fifty-third and Adelaide in her twenty-sixth year when the marriage took place—proved no barrier to marital happiness; and they lived in quiet state at Bushey Park. The death of his elder brother York in January 1827 brought him prominently into the limelight: he was now the heir to the throne. In the ministry formed by Canning in the following April he accepted the office of Lord High Admiral; but it was never for a moment contemplated that he alone was to direct naval affairs; and "to keep him on his course" a council of officials was appointed. Trouble quickly developed in "the duke's council;" and William and the chief of the officials, Sir George Cockburn, were soon at loggerheads. The cause of the trouble was William's determination to take his job seriously; and his keenness, which was bitterly resented by the officials, and particularly Cockburn, was interpreted as "fussy interference." He went to the dockyards unattended, and talked to all and sundry; and his observations on the conduct of naval administration, made on his return from these expeditions, were usually much to the point if somewhat uncomplimentary to the Admiralty. Knowing that the council could only "keep him on his course" on land he suddenly hoisted his flag on H.M.S. *Royal Sovereign*, and assumed control of naval affairs. Cockburn sent him a strong letter of protest, which he characterised as "disrespectful and impertinent;" and when Wellington succeeded Canning the Lord High Admiral faced him with a demand for Cockburn's dismissal. Wellington however, took Cockburn's side: and laid the matter before George IV. The king wrote to tell William that he was "in error from the beginning to the end" and commanded him to "give way." William gave way; but a few days later he sailed off to Plymouth; and to every one's amazement led the Channel squadron out to sea in the absence of the vice-admiral. There was another "breeze" with Wellington. The old soldier threatened to resign; but George IV. was now out of patience with the brother whom he protested to love "to my heart's core," and he instructed Wellington to receive William's resignation. On 11th August the Lord High Admiral resigned: "With the impediments thrown and intended to have been thrown in the way of the execution of my office," he said, "I could not have done justice either to the king or to my country." Greville might complain bitterly about William's "morbid official activity" at the Admiralty; but he nevertheless "gingered" up the officials; and the abolition of the "cat" and insistence upon half-yearly reports from ships on their readiness for battle were reforms which were long overdue.

His next public appearance brought him into conflict with his younger brother Cumberland. When the bill to grant relief to the Catholics came up before the Lords William spoke in its favour: it was, he maintained, an act of justice; and he roundly condemned the opposition for their "infamous" and "unjust" attack on the government. Cumberland chose to regard his brother's speech as a deliberate attack upon himself, and replied vigorously. He can hardly have bargained for William's acid retort: "My illustrious relative has been so long abroad that he has almost forgotten what is due to the freedom of debate in this country." There was no love lost between the two brothers.

William took his accession very philosophically: he was genuinely fond of George IV., but he would not wear his heart on his sleeve; and he at once settled down to deal with the business in hand. From the beginning to the end of his reign he was himself; and he made no pretence at being anything but a plain sailor. Greville who was present at the swearing in of the council noted that "His Majesty presided very decently, and looked like a respectable old admiral;" and the company, aware of his habit of plain speaking, cannot have been taken aback when on signing the customary declaration he blurted out that it was "a damned bad pen" which was provided for him. Nevertheless people were somewhat distressed by his unconventional behaviour: at best it was put down to eccentricity, at worst to insipient madness. It was typical of William that after a tiring day inspecting the Coldstream Guards he should go "on a ramble about the streets" in his ordinary clothes and unattended. In the Mall he met an acquaintance, and linking his arm in his walked with him into St James's Street. Outside White's Club a woman, seeing who he was, rushed up and kissed him; and a great crush of people quickly closed in on him. With some difficulty friends piloted him through the surging mass of people back to the palace: his reply to their humble protestations that he ought not to run the risk of being overwhelmed by an enthusiastic populace was: "When I have walked about a few times they will get used to it, and will take no notice." Naturally with the London mob he was immensely popular—and a popular monarch was perhaps the last person the Whigs wanted!

Wellington was charmed with the king. He confessed to Greville that he was delighted with him—"If I had been able to deal with my late master as I do with my present, I should have got on much better"—that he was so reasonable and tractable, and "that he had done more business with him in ten minutes than with the other in as many days." On one point William threatened to cause his ministers embarrassment: he thought the coronation "an ill-timed and useless" expense, and he would have dispensed with it. When they told him that he must bow to precedent he yielded, but he insisted

that there should be no great expenditure of money on the ceremony, and when he was informed that some of the peers intended to boycott it on that account, he calmly remarked that their absence would result in "greater room and less heat" in the abbey. The coronation took place on 9th September 1831.

In the meantime stirring events were taking place in the world of politics. The cry of parliamentary reform was on men's lips; and the time was gone when it could be stifled or ignored. There was a good reason for a thorough and systematic reform of the parliamentary system. The House of Commons could no longer claim to be representative of the country. The franchise qualifications were antiquated; and growing industrial towns in the midlands and north of England were without parliamentary representation, whereas the ownership of a pigsty in Richmond in Yorkshire secured the return of a member. These glaring anomalies were emphasised by the knowledge that five-sixths of the men who sat in the Commons were the nominees of the great landlords; and the votes of such men were cast against measures of national well-being when the vested interests of their patrons were at stake.

Wellington's brave announcement that "no better system could be devised by the wit of man" than the existing parliamentary system was the battle-cry of the forlorn hope of the Tories (November 1830). It was answered with riots in the industrial centres; and so high ran the popular feeling that, much to William's disgust, the government refused to allow him to attend the banquet at the Guildhall on Lord Mayor's Day. Wellington's government fell: William thereupon sent for the Whig Grey. The king recognised that parliamentary reform was "a perilous question;" but like Catholic emancipation it could not be shelved; and he hoped that Grey would succeed in calming the ugly temper of the country by a measure of reform which would prove acceptable even to the moderate Tories. His one object was to avoid "a quarrel between the two branches of the legislature;" and he explained his own views clearly to Grey when he took office.

The defeat of the first Reform Bill brought William abruptly to the parting of the ways. To command a Tory to form a government would result in a further outbreak of disorders in the country: to dissolve parliament, as Grey requested, would bring down upon his head the full weight of Tory wrath. What is not generally known is that William had long displayed a keen interest in the condition of his poorer subjects; and the decision which he arrived at—to allow Grey to appeal to the country—was dictated by a sincere desire to ameliorate the lot of the workers in the towns by a gradual widening of the franchise. When the royal commissioners appeared to dissolve parliament the Tory peers quickly seized upon the opportunity to move an address to the king protesting against the dissolution; but Grey hastened to St James's Palace to tell the king what

was on foot; and when William learnt that his presence in the chamber would terminate the debate on the address he immediately undertook to attend in person. "My lord, I'll go if I go in a hackney coach," he said when Grey apologised that there would hardly be time for a state procession to be arranged. On his return to the palace the crowds surged round him yelling, "Well done, old boy!" and "Billy's our man!"

The Whigs triumphed at the elections; and returned to Westminster pledged to "the bill, the whole bill, and nothing but the bill." Lord John Russell —"Finality Jack," as he was soon to be called on account of his view that further reform would be unnecessary—piloted the second Reform Bill successfully through the Commons; and in September 1831 it went up to the Lords. The Tory peers soon made short work of it; and riots broke out in Bristol, Coventry, Derby, Nottingham, Worcester, and elsewhere. William himself was convinced —and he was nearer the truth than perhaps he knew—that the country was on the verge of revolution; and the excesses of the mob, particularly in Bristol, where the rioters had the city in their hands for three terrible days, caused him seriously to reflect upon his line of action. Grey requested him to make sufficient new peers to liquidate the Tory majority in the Lords; but he hesitated to take such a step, and he was unmoved even when Grey suggested as a compromise that he should make half a dozen peers merely to frighten the Tories into surrender. In January 1832, however, William informed Grey that if "the dreaded necessity arose he would not deny to his ministers the power of acting up to the full exigency of the case:" at the same time it was understood between them that the new creations would be confined as far as possible to the eldest sons of peers, thus avoiding what William thought was "an undesirable extension" of the peerage.

The third Reform Bill was again rejected by the Lords in March 1832; and Grey now applied to William to act "up to the full exigency of the case." But he refused; and Grey resigned. Naturally his action was condemned; and Creevey could write that "our beloved Billy cuts a damnable figure in this business." Actually it was not as base a repudiation of a promise as the general public imagined: Grey had found it impossible to nominate a sufficient number of eldest sons of peers; and William was therefore faced with the alternative of extending the peerage, which he wished to avoid. But what was he to do? Both Lyndhurst and Wellington failed to form ministries; and there was no justification for another appeal to the country. So Grey came back; and brought with him a firm promise from the king that peers would be created if necessary. "In order to save His Majesty's personal honour as to the creation of peers," Wellington undertook to "remove all pretence for such a creation by withdrawing his opposition;" and with a chamber denuded of Tory Lords the great Reform Bill became law.

Condemned at the time William certainly was, but that was the verdict of a public opinion which never paused to examine his behaviour during the crisis. Greville rather smugly thought him now to be " one of the silliest old gentlemen in his dominions ; " but Creevey, on the other hand, praised the close attention which he gave to " every part of the plan ; " and Grey himself made a generous reference to " the king's most noble conduct." William's position is perhaps best defined in Creevey's words : " King Billy hates the peer-making, but as a point of honour to his ministers he gives them unlimited power."

The year 1834 brought the king another political crisis. In July Grey resigned owing to differences in the Cabinet : he was replaced by Melbourne. The new ministry was palpably weak : it never enjoyed William's confidence, chiefly because of its views on the Irish Church. When Althorp, the ministerial leader in the Commons, succeeded to the earldom of Spencer in November, even Melbourne recognised that the mainstay of his government was gone : nevertheless he recommended Lord John Russell as the new leader in the Commons ; but William bluntly told Melbourne that Russell " would make a wretched figure " in the House, and with little more ado dismissed Melbourne. There was a tremendous hullabaloo when the country learnt what had happened. *The Times*, whose political respectability was then somewhat questionable, averred that " the queen has done it all ; " and William was subjected to a widespread outburst of unpopularity. To dismiss a ministry which had the confidence of parliament was the sort of thing his father did : it savoured of a despotism which party politicians now reserved for their respective parties.

" It is a long time since a government has been so summarily dismissed, regularly kicked out in the simplest sense of that phrase," wrote Greville. But probably William's decision was what Melbourne hoped for : the prime minister was aware that his colleagues in the government were hopelessly divided on the Irish Church question ; and a summary dismissal by the king was a convenient means of saving the party's face. Melbourne himself admitted that he did not altogether " blame " the king ; and the fact remains—and the king undoubtedly felt that it fully justified his action—that the ministers no longer enjoyed their sovereign's confidence.

Melbourne's dismissal was Peel's opportunity. The new prime minister at once decided to appeal to the country, and consequently parliament was dissolved in December 1834. The election which followed the dissolution saw the issue of the famous *Tamworth Manifesto*, which is regarded as the foundation-stone of the new conservatism : the Peelites won 120 seats, but they were still in the minority, and the government was defeated by a narrow majority on the address when parliament reassembled. Peel hung on for a time ; but on 8th April 1835 he resigned ; and William promptly sent for Melbourne.

The king received the new ministry without a trace of animosity : he no

longer protested that Russell was not the right man to lead in the Commons. But the crisis of the previous year had told upon him. He had lost some of his former popularity (stones were thrown at his carriage); and although he was the last man consciously to play to the gallery, popular applause meant much to him. There were, moreover, family complications. His wife and sisters believed that he had truckled too complacently to the reformers; and the Fitz-Clarences—his children by Mrs Jordan—were disappointed at his treatment of them. What grieved him more than anything was the fact that his sister-in-law, the Duchess of Kent, would not allow her charming daughter Victoria to visit him as often as he would have liked; and the bitterness of their relations threatened to become a public scandal. The speech which he made on his birthday in 1836 set all the fashionable world talking. Earlier in the year, the Duchess of Kent, without any reference to him, appropriated seventeen rooms in Kensington Palace. The king could not contain his anger; and in his response to the toast of his health he made a deliberate attack on his sister-in-law. According to Greville the speech ran something as follows:

> I trust in God that my life may be spared for nine months longer, after which period, in the event of my death, no regency would take place. I should then have the satisfaction of leaving the royal authority to the personal exercise of that young lady (pointing to the princess), the Heiress Presumptive of the Crown, and not in the hands of a person now near me, who is surrounded by evil advisers, and who is herself incompetent to act with the propriety in the station in which she would be placed. I have no hesitation in saying that I have been insulted—grossly and continually insulted—by that person, but I am determined to endure no longer a course of behaviour so disrespectful to me. Amongst many other things, I have particularly to complain of the manner in which that young lady has been kept away from my court; she has been repeatedly kept from my drawing-rooms, at which she ought always to have been present, but I am fully resolved that this shall not happen again. I would now have her know that I am King, and I am determined to make my authority respected, and for the future I shall insist and command that the Princess do upon all occasions appear at my court, as it is her duty to do.

The audience gasped as the words poured out of his lips; if his resentment was understandable (and the Duchess's behaviour won him a good deal of sympathy) the public humiliation of his sister-in-law was an act of bad manners, which not even his habit of frankness will condone!

His wish to live long enough to avoid a regency was fulfilled. Victoria came of age on 24th May 1837; and he was still alive. But he was failing; and though he would not listen to the physicians, he was now seriously ill. Early in June he faced the grim truth that death was near. "I know I am going," he said to his physician, "but I should like to see another anniversary of Waterloo. Try if you cannot tinker me up to last over that date." Again a wish was fulfilled: he lived to hear the shouting which greeted the 18th; but early in the

morning of the 20th he died, murmuring "the Church, the Church;" and on 8th July his body was laid to rest beside his father and brother in St George's Chapel in Windsor. Greville was never enamoured of him; but he was bound to admit that "he was a good-natured, kind-hearted, and well-meaning man, and he always acted an honourable and straightforward, if not always a sound and discreet, part." And that, perhaps, was the ideal which he set himself; for he was jealous of his honour at all times and never oblivious of his limitations.

PART IV

IMPERIAL KINGSHIP

(1837-1937)

CHAPTER I

THE YOUNG QUEEN

THE HISTORY OF any people is like a river which has many tributaries, currents, rapids. Two of the " currents " of the English people—though it is not unique in this respect—are conservatism and liberalism (one might almost say radicalism) which together amount to moderation in all things. Thus it has come about that while monarchy has altered its character radically in the last five hundred years monarchy remains, the final expression, the high point or apex, of the English constitution.

The Constitution—or rather politics, for there was no definite Constitution —had never been very democratic. Since the middle of the fifteenth century, or thereabouts, there had always been a " governing class " who shared power with the king; and since the opening of the eighteenth century the king's share had on the whole grown distinctly less. When a girl completely inexperienced in government succeeded to the throne, surrounded by magnates of unsurpassed wealth and self-confidence, it might have been expected that the power of the monarchy would disappear altogether.

Victoria, born 24th May 1819, at Buckingham Palace, was the only child of Edward Duke of Kent, fourth son of George III. Of the elder brothers of the Duke of Kent, George IV. had one daughter who died in 1817; William IV. had no legitimate children; the third, Frederick Duke of York, commander-in-chief of the army, was unmarried. The Duke of Kent, who was also a soldier, married late in life, in 1818, a widow, the Princess of Leiningen, and died in 1820, leaving a daughter, Victoria, eight months old. Victoria's mother was a daughter of Francis Duke of Saxe-Coburg. By her first husband, the Prince of Leiningen, she had one son, who became a distinguished German liberal statesman, and a daughter, Feodore, who married Ernest Prince of Hohenlöhe-Langenburg. An aunt of Victoria's (a daughter of George III.) married King Frederick I. of Würtemberg. Thus Victoria was closely connected with four important German families—Saxe-Coburg, Würtemberg, Leiningen, and Hohenlohe. She spoke German as readily as English; indeed German was the language which she regularly used at home before she became queen and after her marriage. Her *domestic* social world (as distinct from her *public* social world as queen) was a society of German princes and princesses whose names star the pages of much of her early correspondence.

The family name of the British monarchs since George I. was Guelf, the

name of the Dukes of Brunswick-Luneburg (erected into the kingdom of Hanover in 1815). The queen's marriage with Albert of Saxe-Coburg, whose family name was Wettin, and the birth of her children, altered the title of the reigning dynasty from House of Brunswick to House of Coburg. Her grandson, George V., during the World War, changed the title of his family to House of Windsor.

The Princess Victoria was brought up in simple circumstances. Her home, Kensington Palace, is a pleasant mansion with a fine garden, but it is a palace of the simpler type. The Duchess of Kent was never wealthy. In her reminiscences Queen Victoria wrote:

> "I was brought up very simply—never had a room to myself till I was nearly grown up—always slept in my mother's room till I came to the Throne. At Claremont, and in the small houses at the bathing-places, I sat and took my lessons in my Governess's bedroom."

Claremont was the mansion in Surrey of Victoria's uncle, Leopold, a younger son of Francis, Duke of Saxe-Coburg. Leopold was then a widower; his wife, Charlotte (only daughter of George IV.), died in 1817. Uncle Leopold's house, Claremont, was the grandest place to which the Princess Victoria was regularly taken on visits; otherwise her holidays were generally spent at the seaside, at Ramsgate, Broadstairs, or some such place, in a hired house or lodgings. She was educated by governesses in the Christian religion as taught by the Church of England, English history, geography with the use of globes, arithmetic, and Latin. Throughout her life Victoria retained the simple way of living and the habit of industry which she had learned as a girl.

The Queen inscribed the facts of her accession on 20th June, at the age of eighteen, in her journal:

> "I was awoke at six o'clock by Mamma, who told me that the Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Conyngham were here, and wished to see me. I got out of bed and went into my sitting-room (only in my dressing-gown) and *alone*, and saw them. Lord Conyngham (the Lord Chamberlain) then acquainted me that my poor Uncle, the King, was no more, and had expired at 12 minutes past 2 this morning, and consequently that I was *Queen*. . . .
>
> "Since it has pleased Providence to place me in this station, I shall do my utmost to fulfil my duty towards my country; I am very young and perhaps in many, though not in all things, inexperienced, but I am sure that very few people have more real goodwill and more real desire to do what is fit and right than I have.
>
> "Breakfasted, during which time faithful Stockmar came and talked to me. Wrote a letter to dear Uncle Leopold and a few words to dear good Feodore. Received a letter from Lord Melbourne in which he said he would wait upon me at a little before 9. At 9 came Lord Melbourne, whom I saw in my room, and of *course quite alone*, as I shall *always* do all my Ministers."

Lord Melbourne was Prime Minister at this time. The Queen liked him from

the start and noted in her journal: "He is a very straightforward, honest, clever, and good man." Stockmar, whom she said she saw thrice on that day of her accession, was a Coburg physician and intimate friend of the Coburg family. Apparently quite without ambition for himself, he was the trusted adviser of all the Coburg princes and of the Duchess of Kent and Princess Victoria. He had a wife and family of his own at Coburg, but he made long visits to England and stayed with the Queen. Stockmar was a sound German liberal. He and Uncle Leopold (who had been elected King of the Belgians in 1830) and Lord Melbourne were the political educators of the young Victoria.

The Duke of Kent had been a Whig. Although he was dead when Victoria was growing up, something of a Whig atmosphere hovered in the household. The British monarch has to be above politics. Queen Victoria knew this rule perfectly and meant to adhere to it. In any case she could never be reactionary after receiving a Whig tradition from her father, a liberal outlook from her Coburg relatives, particularly Leopold of Belgium, and from Stockmar, and after being so tactfully and sagaciously advised regarding her duties by Lord Melbourne.

By the time Victoria succeeded to the throne, the British people were becoming ardent reformers, in political, but still more in humanitarian, questions. Interest in public affairs was extending far outside the small circle of the "governing class." Writing in 1843 and looking back to the years just after Waterloo, Disraeli wrote: "To us with our *Times* newspaper every morning on our breakfast table, bringing on every subject which can interest the public mind a degree of information and intelligence which must form a security against any prolonged public misconception, it seems incredible that only five and twenty years ago the English mind could have been so ridden and hoodwinked, and that, too, by men of mean attainments and moderate abilities."[1] Disraeli regarded the ministers of the years 1815–32 (except Wellington, Peel, and Canning) as "mediocrities." Whether this stricture was justified or not, it could not be applied to the ministers of Queen Victoria's reign, early, middle, or late. The *Queen's Prime Ministers* (the title of a very interesting series of books which were published in the latter part of her reign) were notable, impressive, and (with the exception of Lord Aberdeen) powerful personalities—some of them very powerful indeed. Yet from the first Victoria stood up to them all and held her own, though she did not (or only very rarely did) exercise more power than was comprised in Bagehot's description of the prerogative as the right to be consulted, to encourage, to warn.[2] Victoria understood what Disraeli called, "the real Pitt system"—"that the sovereign of England should never be degraded into the position of a Venetian Doge." Lord Melbourne's ministry was Whig but by no means democratic: the Prime Minister was a peer; the Home Secretary

[1] Disraeli, *Coningsby*, Book II., Chap. I. [2] Bagehot, *The English Constitution* (1867), Chap. III.

(Lord John Russell) was the son of a duke ; the Foreign Secretary (Lord Palmerston) was a peer though, as he had an Irish title, he could stand for election and sit in the House of Commons ; the Colonial and War Secretary (always combined until 1854) was Lord Glenelg : all the " key-posts," except that of Chancellor of the Exchequer, were held by men of title. And the Chancellor of the Exchequer whose modest budget in 1837 amounted to £47,240,000, was Spring Rice, later Lord Mounteagle.

In his first New Year's letter to the Queen the Prime Minister wrote : " It will always be to Lord Melbourne a cause of the most lively satisfaction to have assisted Your Majesty in the commencement of your reign, which was not without trouble and difficulty." The year 1837–38 was indeed somewhat alarming. At home a large association of workers, chiefly at Birmingham, put forward the *People's Charter*, six demands for : universal suffrage ; vote by ballot ; annual parliaments ; payment of members ; abolition of the property qualification for members of parliament ; equal electoral districts. Although the claim for " universal " suffrage did not envisage votes for women, and the other claims (except that for a general election every year) seem now moderate enough (and all except the third and last are now the law of the land), the Chartist programme was a little disturbing, or would have been if the governing class had taken very much notice of it ; and in 1848 in London and the big industrial centres there was some rioting which the Government regarded seriously ; and there was an attempt at rebellion, connected with Chartism, in Tipperary.

In 1837 a violent rebellion occurred in Canada, at that time divided into the Upper and Lower Provinces (roughly equivalent to Ontario and Quebec). The leader of the rebellion in Upper Canada was a Scotsman, William Lyon Mackenzie; in Lower Canada a French Canadian, Louis Joseph Papineau. The insurrections were suppressed by the authorities without requiring any extra troops from Great Britain. Early in the year 1838 the eminent Whig Parliamentary reformer, Lord Durham, was sent to Canada as Governor-General to make an inquiry and to settle the troubles. Victoria was all in favour of this choice. She wrote to Lord Melbourne (15th January 1838) : " The Queen has written *approved* on Lord Melbourne's letter as he desired ; but adds a line to express her satisfaction at Lord Durham's having accepted the office of Governor-General of Canada." In a sense his mission was a failure, for he was haughty and rude to the Canadians, and he exceeded his powers by exiling some of the rebels to Bermuda. After being six months in Canada he was recalled in November 1838. He returned broken in health though not in spirit and died a year and a half later. In the meantime, however, he had written a great Report on the affairs of Canada which makes an epoch in the history of the British Commonwealth of Nations. Like all the Reports of Royal Commissions of Inquiry (and in effect Lord Durham was himself a Royal Commission in Canada) the Report is a long and thorough

document, an account of the whole country and its affairs. Its big contribution to Commonwealth policy was in advocating that the Canadians be made responsible for conducting their own government and administration. This bold method of curing discontent between the colonies and the Government in Great Britain was gradually applied in Canada from about 1840, and subsequently in Australia, New Zealand, Newfoundland, and South Africa. Lord Durham is the founder of Responsible Government in the " Dominions."

In May 1839, Lord Melbourne, who was losing the confidence of the House of Commons (his own Cabinet was not united in his support), resigned. " There is no party in the State," he wrote, " to which your Majesty can now resort, except that great party which calls itself conservative." He advised the Queen to ask the Duke of Wellington to form a Government; if the Duke declined, she should ask Sir Robert Peel. Next day (8th May) he received this rather disturbing reply :

> The Queen thinks Lord Melbourne may possibly wish to know how she is this morning; the Queen is somewhat calmer; she was in a wretched state till nine o'clock last night, when she tried to occupy herself and try to think less gloomily of this dreadful change, and she succeeded in calming herself till she went to bed at twelve, and she slept well; but on waking this morning, all—all that had happened in one short eventful day came most forcibly to her mind, and brought back her grief; the Queen, however, feels better now; but she couldn't touch a morsel of food last night, nor can she this morning.

The Queen, as advised, sent for the Duke of Wellington and said that she supposed he knew why she had sent for him. The Duke, who was a man of few words, said, No, he had no idea. The Queen then explained that she wished him to form a Government. The Duke replied that he had no authority over the House of Commons : that if he was to say black was black they would say it was not. The Queen then wrote to Peel, who came to Buckingham Palace on the same day (8th May 1839) after two o'clock, " embarrassed and put out." Peel was apt to be shy and awkward in any company. He consented—not at all readily however—to form a Government, but said that the Queen would have to give a mark of confidence in the new Government in the arrangements about her household. " He is such a cold, odd man," the Queen wrote to Lord Melbourne, " she can't make out what he means." She soon found out. On 9th May, Peel demanded that, among other administrative changes, the Queen should give up her present Ladies of the Household and accept ladies whose opinions (or whose husbands or relatives) were more in conformity with the politics of the Government. " To which," wrote the Queen to Lord Melbourne, breaking out into the first person singular, " I replied that I would never consent, and I never saw a man so frightened." This did not end the matter. Peel insisted. The Queen was immovable, and told Lord Melbourne : " She thinks her Prime Minister will

cut a very sorry figure indeed if he resigns on this." He did resign or rather declined to enter into office. The Conservative ministry was not formed. Lord Melbourne carried on the Government until August 1841.

In the same year, 1839, as the brief but intense struggle took place with Peel, a great benefit was conferred on the people when the penny postage was adopted. This reform was advocated by Rowland Hill, who had been for many years a schoolmaster. Lord Melbourne's Government agreed to adopt the penny postage and gave Rowland Hill a place in the Treasury to work out a scheme. On 10th January 1840 the system of a uniform penny postal rate throughout the British Isles came into operation. Previously letters had been charged according to weight and distance, the fee was collected on delivery, and might be as high as a shilling or eighteen pence. Now the penny postage fee was to be prepaid by affixing a stamp. The Queen, who was an indefatigable writer, and an excellent correspondent, must herself have benefited considerably by the reform. A few months later (November 1839) her approaching marriage to her cousin, Prince Albert, second son of Duke Ernst I. of Saxe-Coburg, was announced. He was three months younger than the Queen, who had met him for the first time in 1836. Whatever Prince Albert's feelings were, the Queen's letters show that she had not made up her mind before July 1839. Before she decided to offer to Prince Albert to marry him (for she felt clearly that *he* could not ask the Queen of England) she consulted Lord Melbourne, who approved of her choice. Albert and his elder brother Ernst came to Windsor on a visit in October 1839. Three days later (October 15th) the Queen wrote to Uncle Leopold, King of the Belgians : " My mind is quite made up—and I told Albert of it this morning." The marriage took place on 10th February 1840, in the Chapel Royal, London. The Queen and Prince Consort then went off to Windsor Castle.

Marriage always closes a chapter and begins another for two people, for queens and princes just as for anybody else. So 10th February 1840 closes the first chapter for Victoria's reign. Her letters show that she liked her work and took it seriously. Her husband, able man of affairs though he was, could teach this young woman of twenty nothing in politics, at any rate, domestic politics. She grasped clearly the functions of a constitutional monarch, and from the first made no mistakes. Her energy and interest were given to her constitutional duties and left little room for the leisurely arts. In these the Prince was rich. This tall, graceful, athletic man had a superlatively high culture ; his knowledge was wide and his taste was sound in music, painting, and letters. The England to which he came was worthy of his high culture. Robert Browning, only twenty-five years old, published *Strafford* in 1837. The *Pickwick Papers*, which came out in parts, had been completed in 1837 ; *Oliver Twist* began to come out in that year, and *Nicholas Nickleby* in 1838. In this year Carlyle's *Sartor*

Resartus was published in book-form after appearing (incredible as it may seem) serially in *Fraser's Magazine*. Charles Keene and Macready and Helena Faucit were acting in 1838, Bulwer Lytton brought out his play *The Lady of Lyons* at Covent Garden, and Turner painted *The Fighting Téméraire*. Next year Darwin published *A Naturalist's Voyage Round The World*. The zenith of English culture was not reached yet. Abundant riches, at any rate of literature, came pouring out for another thirty years.

At the end of *Coningsby or The New Generation*, Disraeli's hero, on a sultry July day, walks towards sunset up Pall Mall, past the Carlton and the Reform to the Oxford and Cambridge Club. There he dines alone, takes up the evening papers, reads a political speech. Having dined, he goes into the library and reads. It was the natural way for many a young man, and for nearly all older men, to spend their evening, if they had a club; and they did so all through Queen Victoria's reign. It is scarcely necessary to add that in the present year of grace you will look in vain in the well-stocked libraries of any Pall Mall or St. James's Street club in the evening after dinner to see the deep chairs all occupied by members reading.

. . . . . .

In that marvellous springtime of her young married life the Queen had a serious trial which she faced with dauntless courage. On Sunday, 29th May 1842, as she and Albert were driving back from Chapel, the Prince saw a man aim a pistol at the carriage. The pistol hung fire and nothing more happened. On arriving at Buckingham Palace the Prince mentioned what he had seen. Investigations were made, but little was found out. On Monday, 30th May, the Queen and Prince drove out again in an open carriage, in order to dare the man to shoot again and so to disclose himself. This is the inference to be drawn from the Queen's letter to her uncle the King of the Belgians. After describing the inquiries, made fruitlessly, about the man who aimed the pistol on Sunday, she writes:

> Accordingly, after some consultation, as *nothing* could be done, we drove out. Plain-clothes police were posted along the route. On the return journey as the carriage drove down Constitution Hill very fast, a report of a pistol-shot was heard. The man, who was a cabinetmaker called John Francis, was apprehended by the police and was identified as the man who aimed the pistol on Sunday. The Queen and Prince drove to Buckingham Palace without stopping. She wrote to the King of the Belgians: "We both felt very glad that our drive had had the effect of having the man seized . . . I was really not at all frightened."

CHAPTER II

SOCIAL ADVANCE

DISRAELI CONSIDERED THAT the advance in material prosperity of the British people in the early nineteenth century diminished, for a time, their political capacity. In *Coningsby* (1844) he wrote referring to the period after the Napoleonic struggle:

> " The war had diverted the energies of the English people into channels by no means favourable to political education. Conquerors of the world, with their ports filled with the shipping of every clime, and their manufacturers supplying the European Continent, in the art of self-government, that art in which their fathers excelled, they had become literally children."

The Reform Act of 1832, though it added only about half a million people to the hundred and fifty thousand who elected the House of Commons, did greatly increase the interest of the citizens in politics and raised the level of ability in parliament. The Act was followed by a notable series of reforms in local government, in poor-law, in factories ; and also by the great Act emancipating all slaves within the Empire (1833). Yet there was much to be done in the fourth decade, which became known as the " Hungry Forties."

What made the 'forties hungry was the Corn Laws, particularly the law of 1815 which prohibited the import of foreign corn unless the domestic price in England was 80s. a quarter. In effect the Government guaranteed the British farmer a price of about 80s. a quarter. The population had, accordingly, to pay about 1s. for the 4 lb. loaf. The evils of dear bread and the Corn Laws did not escape the great philanthropists of the age, most of whom were middle-class men with fortunes in business ; but the " Landed Interest " stood inflexibly for high agricultural protection. Yet protection, though it kept rents high and bread prices high, had no such effect on agricultural wages, which about the year 1840 were 7s. to 8s. a week. In 1838 seven Manchester merchants founded an Anti-Corn-Law League to explain by meetings, pamphlets, and articles in the newspaper press the folly of legislatively keeping bread dear. " Manchester," however, and the bustling capitalist and high industrial middle-class people, did not appreciate the evils of low wages and long hours and overcrowding in industrial towns as keenly as they realised the bread question. Free competition, non-intervention, *laissez-faire* in regard to the growing and selling of corn would mean cheap food for the people. At the same time, *laissez-faire* in industry was permitting conditions of terrible under-

payment, overwork, overcrowding, child-labour, and other abuses to be almost universal. Abolition of the Corn Laws would automatically cheapen bread and to that extent make wages to be worth more; but it would not eradicate the other industrial abuses.

Disraeli, who was forty years old when *Coningsby* was published in 1844 and had been a member of the House of Commons for seven years, was deeply conscious in a general way of what was called the "Condition of England" Question, though he was much sounder in regard to the abuses of industrial *laissez-faire* than he was in regard to those of agricultural high protection. In *Coningsby* he had meant to deal with the "Condition of England" Question, but found that the fascinating world of politics absorbed him and his story. So, as soon as he had finished *Coningsby*, he settled down to write a social novel which he called *Sybil*, after the delicate ethereal heroine whom his imagination conceived. The novel was published in 1845. It would be going too far to say that Sybil, in Disraeli's mind, was the young Queen of England, but his political and social outlook idealised monarchy and idealised the Queen, whom in later life he frequently alluded to as "The Faery." In *Sybil or the Two Nations* (by this sub-title he indicated the rich and the poor) he appealed to her "the Queen of every sea, and of nations in every zone." His appeal, however, was not on behalf of these growing nursling nations of the British Empire (though in later years he was to be a prophet for them too).

> It is not of these that I would speak; but of a Nation nearer her footstool, and which at this moment looks to her with anxiety, with affection, perhaps with hope. Fair and serene, she has the blood and beauty of the Saxon. Will it be her proud destiny at length to bear relief to the suffering millions and with that soft hand which might inspire troubadours and guerdon knights, break the last links in the chain of Saxon thraldom?

In the novel Disraeli, who had read the Government reports and also Chartist writings, gave a very graphic account of an English factory town in the North and also described the dreadful conditions of work of women and children in mines. It is not known whether the Queen at this time took notice of Disraeli's direct appeal to her in *Sybil*. She happened just now to regard Disraeli with no particular favour and to consider him of no great importance. Sir Robert Peel had become Prime Minister in 1841 without making any trouble about the Ladies of the Household; and the Queen had now complete confidence in him. Though a Tory, Disraeli was a severe critic of the Prime Minister and was a danger to the Government's majority in the House. After one occasion in 1844, when the Government majority sank to twenty-two, the Queen wrote (18th July) to the King of the Belgians:

> We were really in the greatest *possible* danger of having a resignation of the Government *without knowing to whom to turn*, and this from the recklessness of a handful

> of foolish *half* 'Puseyite,' half '*Young England*' people![1] I am sure that you will agree with me that Peel's resignation would not only be for us (for *we cannot* have a better and a *safer* Minister) but for the whole country, and for the peace of Europe —*a great calamity*.

As a matter of fact, Parliament had redressed some of the outstanding abuses which Disraeli described in *Sybil*, for he was writing historically about the past decade. In 1842 a Mining Act prohibited the employment of women and children in mines. In 1844 a Factory Act limited the working hours of children under thirteen to six and a half hours each day and of persons aged thirteen to eighteen and of adult women to twelve hours a day.

The Anti-Corn Law agitation divided the people (chiefly on class lines) very deeply. The Queen, whose political sense was sound, gave no indication of her private views, but accepted the advice of her responsible minister, Peel. Sir Robert himself hesitated greatly and consulted the Queen about his position in Parliament several times.

The Corn Laws came to their end in a great series of debates in the House of Commons in 1846. Peel, as Prime Minister, had to bear the chief burden on the side of "Repeal," for the Whigs or Liberals, who were naturally the most convinced and ardent Repealers, had not enough strength to form a Government. Disraeli, though Tory, was aflame with energy, resisting Repeal in the House of Commons, though he had not actually the leadership of the Resisters: this position fell to the Tory squire, Lord George Bentinck. The two men, united in this common task, became great friends, though they seemed to have little enough in common. Lord George kept horses in three counties and was told that if the Corn Laws were repealed he would save fifteen hundred a year in his stables. "I don't care for that," he said; "what I cannot bear is being sold." He meant that Sir Robert Peel had inaugurated his prime ministership with a Protectionist majority. Those who would now be called the "Die-Hards" —the out-and-out Protectionist Tories—regarded Peel's adoption of the policy of Repeal of the Corn Laws as betrayal. Disraeli, who shared this view, nevertheless does full justice (in the *Life of Lord George Bentinck*) to Peel's parliamentary gifts:

> This remarkable man, who in private life was constrained and often awkward, who could never address a public meeting or make an after-dinner speech without being ill at ease, and generally saying something stilted or even a little ridiculous, in the Senate was the readiest, easiest, most flexible and adroit of men. He played upon the House of Commons as on an old fiddle.

The potato crop had practically failed in Ireland in 1845 so that there was no alternative to "opening the ports" in order that foreign corn could be

[1] The "Puseyites" were the "High Church" friends of Dr Pusey of Oxford. "Young England" was a small group of politicians; the chief members were Disraeli, Lord John Manners, George Smythe.

admitted for the emergency period. Peel, however, had made up his mind at last that the Corn Laws must be repealed for good. In a debate in the House on 9th February 1846 Disraeli argued the Protectionist case on lines that now appear surprisingly modern :

> " I want to ask the right honourable gentleman an important question : Does he believe that he can fight hostile tariffs with free imports ? That is the point (' Hear, hear ! '). ' Hear, hear ! ' from the disciples of the School of Manchester ! . . . They believe they can fight hostile tariffs with free imports, and they tell us very justly : ' Let us take care of our imports, and everything else will take care of itself ! ' "

Disraeli had no belief of this kind. He held that imports should be regulated, and that " moderate protection "—which he considered to be the best for all countries—could be obtained by the British Government using its own tariffs along with diplomacy.

Some repealers seemed to suggest that a transfer of power from capital in land to capital in industry was necessary to save the constitution. Disraeli scorned this idea :

> " I believe that the Monarchy of England, its sovereignty mitigated by the power of the established estates of the realm, has its roots in the hearts of the people, and is capable of securing the happiness of the people and the power of the state. If this be a worn-out dream—if indeed there is to be a change—I for one, anxious as I am to maintain the present polity of this country, ready to make as many sacrifices as any man for that object—if there is to be this great change, I for one hope that the foundations of it may be deep, the scheme comprehensive, and that, instead of falling under such a thraldom, under the thraldom of capital, under the thraldom of those who, while they boast of their intelligence, are more proud of their wealth—if we must find new forces to maintain the ancient throne and immemorial monarchy of England, I for one hope we may find that novel power in the invigorating energies of an educated and enfranchised people."

In the previous year (1845) Peel had been ready to resign the Government to other hands and the Queen had offered the position of Prime Minister to Lord John Russell, who, however, was unable to form a Government. He had, accordingly, promised to the Queen that he would help Sir Robert Peel to repeal the Corn Laws. And thus it came about that in 1846, in spite of all Disraeli's and Lord George Bentinck's efforts, the Tory Peel carried the Corn Laws Repeal Bill in the House of Commons on 18th May by means of his own followers and the Whigs. On 25th June the Bill went, rather surprisingly, through the House of Lords which contained only great landowners. On the same day Peel was defeated in the House of Commons on the question of a Coercion Bill for the suppression of agrarian crime in Ireland. Disraeli relates the scene in

his *Life of Lord George Bentinck*. The division in the House had just been taken :

> " The news that the Government were not only beaten, but by a majority so large as 73, began to circulate. An incredulous murmur passed it along the Treasury Bench.
>
> " ' They say we are beaten by 73,' whispered the most important member of the Cabinet, in a tone of surprise to Sir Robert Peel.
>
> " Sir Robert did not reply, or even turn his head. He looked very grave and extended his chin, as was his habit when he was annoyed and cared not to speak. He began to comprehend his position, and that the Emperor was without his army."

Peel did not ask for a dissolution of Parliament but went down to Osborne in the Isle of Wight where the Queen and Prince Albert were staying, and tendered his resignation. The Queen received it with regret. Her view of the Repeal crisis is expressed in one of her letters, 7th July 1846, to the King of the Belgians : " The Corn Law agitation was such that if Peel had not wisely made this change (for which the *whole* Country blesses him) a convulsion would shortly have taken place, and we should have been *forced* to yield what has been granted as a boon." She added, curiously, for she had a Whig tradition from her father : " No doubt the breaking up of the Party (which *will* come together again, whether under Peel or someone else) is a very distressing thing." Peel's adoption of Repeal had divided the Tories, as it seemed, hopelessly. For some years the " Peelites " retained their identity as a large group in the House of Commons, although their great leader died, after being thrown from his horse, in 1850. In time Disraeli revived the party, under the name of Conservatives. The Queen makes no mention of Disraeli in her letters during the Repeal crisis.

The Repeal of the Corn Laws was the most momentous measure adopted by the Government for social and economic improvement in the Queen's reign. It has been criticised on the ground that it was so complete a repeal as to destroy the balance between agriculture and manufacture. Corn flowed into Great Britain from the Continent and from the United States. Bread fell in price. Industry flourished, for the peoples of the Continent of Europe, industrially less developed than the British and retarded by a series of great wars between 1848 and 1871, were an open market for British goods. " Manchester," the economic doctrine of Cobden, had a complete triumph. The " agricultural interest " was gradually diminished in importance, yet at the end of the nineteenth century it was still Britain's largest industry, employing over a million men ; indeed it is even to-day Britain's largest industry.

Prince Albert (the Prince Consort, as he was styled from 1842) was keenly alive to the advance in industry and to the advance which was taking place in large scale craftsmanship (although the small crafts were declining). He planned to have a great exhibition held in London, to display the arts and crafts and industries of the civilised world. It was to be an international exhibition,

demonstrating not the divisions and rancours of nations but their unconscious co-operation in the necessities and arts and crafts of life. " In the aspect of Europe at the close of 1849," writes the Prince's biographer, " there was little to cheer the political observer." [1] The great Liberal movement of 1848 in Central and Western Europe had largely failed, and reaction—which the Prince diagnosed as " Russian reaction "—was prevailing in all the Great Powers, except England. The Exhibition of 1851 was, in a sense, the Prince's demonstration that Liberal Europe existed, worked, co-operated, met for exchange of ideas and mutual respect.

Curiously, there was a good deal of opposition to the Exhibition. A fortnight before it was opened, the Prince Consort wrote to his mother : " Just at present I am more dead than alive from overwork. The opponents of the Exhibition work with might and main to throw all the old women into panic and to drive myself crazy. The strangers, they give out, are certain to commence a thorough revolution here, to murder Victoria and myself, and to proclaim the Red Republic in England ; the plague is certain to ensue from the confluence of such vast multitudes, and to swallow up those whom the increased price of everything has not already swept away." Nevertheless, when the public were admitted on 1st May 1851 to the majestic glass palace which Sir Joseph Paxton had raised in Hyde Park, there was a chorus of approval. Thackeray wrote a May Day Ode in *The Times* :

But yesterday a naked sod,
The dandies sneered from Rotten Row,
And cantered o'er it to and fro ;
And see 'tis done !
As though 'twere by a wizard's rod,
A blazing arch of lucid glass
Leaps like a fountain from the grass
To meet the sun !

Queen Victoria wrote to the King of the Belgians :

" I wish you *could* have witnessed the *1st May* 1851, the *greatest* day in our history, the *most beautiful* and *imposing* and *touching* spectacle ever seen, and the triumph of my beloved Albert. Truly it was astonishing, a fairy scene. Many cried and all felt touched and impressed with devotional feelings. It was the *happiest, proudest* day in my life, and I can think of nothing else. Albert's dearest name is immortalised with this *great* conception, *his* own, and my *own* dear country *showed* she was *worthy* of it. The triumph is *immense,* for up to the *last* hour the difficulties, the opposition, and the ill-natured attempts to annoy and frighten, of a certain set of fashionables and Protectionists, were immense ; but Albert's temper, patience, firmness, and energy surmounted all, and the feeling is universal. *You* will be astounded at this great work when you see it !—the beauty of the building and the vastness of it all. I can never thank God enough."

[1] Sir Theodore Martin, *Life of the Prince Consort* (1876), ii. p. 236.

The Exhibition lasted throughout the summer, for four and a half months (1st May–15th October 1851), cost not a penny to the Government, attracted exhibits and people from all lands, encouraged art and industry throughout Europe, and left a handsome surplus (£186,000) behind it for helping young scientists and inventors.

CHAPTER III

LORD PALMERSTON

MONARCHS OF EVERY country have taken a great interest in foreign affairs, partly because they belonged to a European caste, a high aristocracy, related within itself by ties of kinship and by the common aspects of their high function. Queen Victoria's interest in foreign affairs and knowledge of this subject were strengthened by Prince Albert whose knowledge was almost unique. The House of Coburg had a European position which afforded it exceptional opportunities for knowing about foreign affairs; and Prince Albert was one of the most intelligent and able of the Coburg princes.

The dominating personality at the Foreign Office in the first twenty-five years of the Queen's reign was Lord Palmerston. His experience of public affairs was unrivalled. He had been Secretary-at-War from 1809 to 1829 in the Prime Ministries of Perceval, Liverpool, Canning, Goderich, Wellington. He was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs from 1830 to 1834; from 1835 to 1841; from 1846 to 1852. He was Home Secretary from 1853 to 1855. He was Prime Minister from 1855 to 1858, and from 1859 to his death in 1865. His great successes as Foreign Secretary were the ending of the Greek War of Independence by the Treaty of London, 1832; the securing of the independence and neutralisation of Belgium by Treaties of London, 1831 and 1839; the liquidation of the disputes between Mehemet Ali, Pasha of Egypt, and the Sultan of Turkey in 1840–41. After this he was less successful. He managed to preserve, or he helped to preserve, Swiss neutrality during the civil war called the Sonderbund in 1847, but he failed to act in concert with France over the Spanish Marriage question of 1846 when Queen Isabella of France married her cousin, and Queen Isabella's sister married a son of King Louis Philippe of France. If the first marriage had proved childless, a French prince could have succeeded to the throne of Spain. In 1850 he pressed the Greek Government very hardly over an incident which became known as the "Don Pacifico" affair when he supported an outrageous claim for damage to property of this British subject in some Athenian riots—a claim which, in the final award, was severely reduced. Lord Palmerston undoubtedly knew the Foreign Office business thoroughly and had the Office well in hand, but he was personally too masterful both as a Cabinet colleague and as a Minister of the Queen.

The letters of Queen Victoria give copious evidence of the friction which Palmerston's ways caused.

The Queen felt it to be her duty to read all the dispatches which entered or left the Foreign Office. Nor did she regard this duty as being merely formal. She liked to see the outgoing dispatches in draft so that any suggestions which she had to make could be considered by the Secretary of State before the dispatch was completed.

1848, the year of European revolutions, was doubtless a year of high pressure in Foreign Office business, but the Queen would not accept this as an excuse for ignoring her position. On 17th April 1848 she writes to Palmerston:

> "The Queen not having heard anything from Lord Palmerston respecting foreign affairs for so long a time, and as he must be in constant communication with the Foreign Ministers in these most eventful and anxious times, writes to urge Lord Palmerston to keep her informed of what he hears, and of the views of the Government on the important questions before us.
>
> She now only gets the Drafts when they are gone."

Lord Palmerston replied civilly enough, but did not excuse himself and did not offer to do better. He sent her the drafts, but, by the time the Queen's comments could be conveyed to him, the dispatches had been signed and sent off. In September 1848, a very important dispatch concerning joint British and French mediation in the Austro-Sardinian war was sent to the Austrian Government, which declined the mediation.

Victoria wrote to the Prime Minister, Lord John Russell (7th September 1848):

> "The Queen must send the enclosed draft to Lord John Russell, with a copy of her letter to Lord Palmerston upon it. Lord Palmerston as usual has pretended not to have had time to submit the draft to the Queen before he sent it off. What the Queen has long suspected and often warned against is on the point of happening, viz. Lord Palmerston's using the new *entente cordiale* for the purpose of wresting from Austria her Italian provinces by French arms. This will be an iniquitous proceeding."

The Queen then saw Lord John Russell and made a memorandum of the conversation (19th September 1848).

> "I said to Lord John Russell that I must mention to him a subject which was a serious one, one that I had delayed mentioning for some time, but which I felt I must speak quite openly to him upon now, namely about Lord Palmerston; that I really felt I could hardly go on with him, that I had no confidence in him, and that it made me seriously anxious and uneasy for the welfare of the country, and for the peace of Europe in general, and that I felt very uneasy from one day to another as to what might happen."

Lord Palmerston, the Queen said to Lord John Russell, was distrusted everywhere abroad; "his writings were always as bitter as gall and did great harm." Palmerston had an answer to the question why the Queen did not always

receive the drafts in good time. He pointed out " that, as 28,000 dispatches were received and sent last year (1848), much expedition is required." The Queen, however, does not appear to have been frightened by the prospect of having to read even something like this number in a year of crisis.

In spite of the Queen's protests, Palmerston did not mend his ways. At last the Queen sent a memorandum to the Prime Minister stating exactly how she demanded to be treated.

" With reference to the conversation about Lord Palmerston which the Queen had with Lord John Russell the other day, and Lord Palmerston's disavowal that he ever intended any disrespect to her by the various neglects of which she has had so long and so often to complain, she thinks it right, in order *to prevent any mistake* for the future, shortly to explain *what it is she expects from her Foreign Secretary*—she requires :

> 1. That he will distinctly state what he proposes in a given case, in order that the Queen may know, as distinctly to what she has given her Royal sanction ;
>
> 2. Having *once given* her sanction to a measure, that it be not arbitrarily altered or modified by the Minister ; such an act she must consider as failing in sincerity towards the Crown and justly to be visited by the exercise of her *Constitutional* right of dismissing that Minister ; she expects to be kept informed of what passes between him and the Foreign Ministers before important decisions are taken, based upon that intercourse ; to receive the Foreign Despatches in good time ; and to have the drafts for her approval sent to her in sufficient time to make herself acquainted with their contents before they must be sent off. The Queen thinks it best that Lord John Russell should show this letter to Lord Palmerston."

The Foreign Secretary, however, was quite incorrigible. When the President of the Second French Republic, Louis Napoleon, made a *coup d'état* on the night of 1st–2nd December 1851, and suspended the constitution, Palmerston let the French Government know that the British Government would not object. He had not consulted the Prime Minister or informed the Queen. This was too much even for the long-suffering Lord John Russell, and Palmerston had to resign.

That Great Britain's foreign affairs were, as a whole, well conducted throughout the reign of Queen Victoria is proved by the fact that in sixty-five years the country was only once involved in a European war ; and even that one, the Crimean (a wholly unnecessary war), was nearly avoided. There were, it is true, an extraordinary number of " little wars," colonial wars ; the list, if set out in black and white, would stagger people by reason of its length. Most of these little wars, however, required the services of only a few thousand soldiers, although the last, the Boer War, required over four hundred and fifty thousand.[1]

During the greater part of the reign, certainly for the first forty years,

[1] R. C. K. Ensor, *England*, 1870–1914 (1936), p. 347.

foreign affairs meant chiefly the Eastern Question, which involved the fate of Turkey in Europe.

The British people were interested in Turkey, which was associated in their minds with the road to India. British travellers and writers familiarised them with the idea of the Near East. Kinglake's *Eothen*, the best short travel book on Turkey, Syria, and Egypt, was published in 1844; Disraeli's *Tancred* in 1847. The Queen, never a great novel reader, may not have read *Tancred*, but she had, none the less, a lively idea of the East. There was a costly and not very successful Afghan war in 1839–42; and two hard-fought wars in 1846 and 1849. The Indian Mutiny of 1857–58 was a terrible crisis, coming immediately after the Crimean War of 1854–56. Lord Palmerston was Prime Minister during the Indian Mutiny. His vigorous and energetic personality made him particularly suitable for dealing with the crisis; and in this period his relations with the Queen were without friction. The Queen approved of the abolition of the East India Company in 1858 and the assumption of direct control by the crown. Her advice on the new organisation of India was helpful to the government. It was not until after another eighteen years that she was proclaimed Empress of India (1st January 1877) during the Prime Ministry of Lord Beaconsfield.

CHAPTER IV

RELIGIOUS LIFE

IN NO OTHER aspect of the life of the English people is the term " Victorian Age " more applicable than in regard to religion. In the early part of the nineteenth century religion seems to have been, among large sections of the people, almost extinct. It is true that John Wesley in the last half of the eighteenth century had inspired a genuine religious revival, and this was continued into the early nineteenth century. Large numbers of the people, however, remained outside the influence of the Wesleyan movement. Although Wesley did not wish it so, his movement and followers remained outside the Church of England, which was the only religious community professing to be the whole people, though indeed it was far from being that.

Before and about the time of the Queen's accession, the parishes and the parish churches in at any rate a considerable number of villages were receiving scant attention. Churchyards were neglected, congregations meagre, services dreary. The " Oxford Movement," which began about 1833, changed all this, though not, of course, all in a moment. It was the work of a group of earnest young clergy, fellows of colleges, men of exceptional ability and of spiritual power. They, as it were, went back to the Middle Ages, and still more to the early Christian Fathers, to refresh themselves, to find sources for beautifying the churches, for beautifying church services. They restored to the Church of England what had been largely lost—earnestness, spirituality, the ever-present, lively sense of the other world. The chief men of the Oxford Movement explained their views in a series of *Tracts for the Times,* of which one, No. 90, by the Reverend John Henry Newman, attained great celebrity, not to say notoriety. Unlike Newman's other works, which are written in beautiful language with deeply interesting thought, Tract No. 90 is rather a dry production. It is an analysis of the Thirty-nine Articles, arguing that they are Catholic in doctrine, and formed in such a way as to make it possible for Catholics to remain within the Church of England. This tract, which was published in 1841, aroused a storm in the Church. Its hostile reception, the misunderstandings (as he considered) about it, were among the steps which led Newman in 1845 to quit the Church of England and join the Church of Rome. He was the most famous, but not the only convert. In the middle of the century the Prime Minister, Lord John Russell, was inclined to be anxious about the " drift to Rome." In 1850 Pope Pius IX. created, or recreated, Roman Catholic

Sees in the United Kingdom and appointed bishops, instead of the Vicars-Apostolic who had wielded authority since the Reformation. Lord John Russell had an Ecclesiastical Titles Bill passed through Parliament, declaring the Papal Bull null and void in Great Britain and Ireland and forbidding the use of the new titles. The Act, though duly passed, was never put into effect. Nicholas Patrick Wiseman, Coadjutor Vicar-Apostolic of the Central District of England, was appointed Cardinal and first Archbishop of Westminster. A man of immense learning, tireless activity, sympathetic nature, and always moderate judgment, Wiseman made a great position for himself in England, and, in spite of the unpromising circumstances of which the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill is an instance, won a recognised place for Roman Catholicism in English life.

Wiseman's successor in the See of Westminster was Henry Edward Manning, once a brilliant member of the " Tractarian Group " in the Oxford Movement. He was an undergraduate of Balliol, a Fellow of Merton College, was ordained, married, and became in time Archdeacon of Chichester. In 1848–50 the Gorham Case aroused tremendous excitement. It is almost impossible to conceive at the present day how deeply or excitedly people were moved by theological controversy. Bishop Phillpotts of Exeter refused to institute the Reverend George Gorham to the living of Brampford Speke, in North Devon, on the ground that Gorham did not believe in the spiritual regeneration caused by baptism. Gorham appealed to the Court of Arches of the Diocese which confirmed the Bishop's decision; he appealed from this to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and was successful, and became Vicar of Brampford Speke. Gorham was an " Evangelical," not a " High " Churchman. He was a fine scholar, a mathematician, had been a Fellow of Queen's College, Cambridge. His " case " naturally attracted widespread attention, as it involved the principles of freedom of thought, of tolerance, and also of orthodoxy, and of the relations of Church and State.

The decision of the Privy Council upholding Mr Gorham offended Manning's " Tractarian " views on doctrine and discipline. Within a year he severed himself from the Church of England (1851). His wife had died a few months after marriage. Manning was admitted to the communion of the Church of Rome, and was ordained priest. After some years of study in Rome he returned to England, became provost in the diocese of Westminster, and in 1865, on Wiseman's death, Archbishop of Westminster. In 1875 he was made Cardinal. An accomplished writer, he was more controversial in method than Wiseman had been. At the Vatican Council in 1870 he was one of the leading supporters of the doctrine of Papal Infallibility, which was promulgated, after long and anxious disputations. In England he took a vigorous part in movements for social and economic reform, and greatly helped the London dockers to their victory in the great " strike " for higher wages in 1888.

Disraeli, whose novels are a sympathetic guide to so many of the Victorian "movements," made the "Roman Revival" a theme of his novel *Lothair*, which was published in 1870. He had been Prime Minister (1868), and had not written a novel for twenty years—not since *Tancred*. On being relieved of the office of Prime Minister he amused himself at his country house, Hughenden (Bucks), in writing *Lothair*. The theme was suggested to his brooding yet lively mind by the conversion of the third Marquis of Bath to Roman Catholicism in December 1868. Lothair, the hero of the novel, is a rich young nobleman who moves in the highest society of London, and whom a highly-bred, tactful, ascetic English cardinal (a compound of Wiseman and Manning) endeavours patiently and subtly to win for the Church of Rome. The emotional young man is drawn in various directions, visits Italy, is caught up in the enthusiasm of the Risorgimento, fights on the side of Garibaldi against the Franco-Papal army at Mentana in 1867, and at last is nearly converted to Rome when, wounded, he is being tended by charitable Roman Catholic ladies and persuasive priests in Rome itself; *nearly*, but not quite, for Lothair returns to England still a Protestant, marries, and settles down in the patrician world of London and country life. As a novel, *Lothair* had an enormous success.

The Queen took the keenest interest in religious affairs, particularly in the Church of England, of which she was the visible head. Her own views were those of a moderate Churchwoman. Her rule, so far as it could be followed, in the making of appointments in the Church, was that "both extremes of High and Low Church are to be avoided."[1] She liked the society of clergy, and depended greatly on the advice of the Dean of Windsor, first Dean Wellesley, and, after his death in 1882, Dean Randall Davidson, later the Archbishop of Canterbury. The office of Dean of Windsor in the time of Queen Victoria amounted to that of confidential adviser to the sovereign on all ecclesiastical affairs. After the death of the Prince Consort in 1861 the Queen was really a very lonely woman, living a retired life, and depending much on masculine sympathy which none of her Prime Ministers, except Disraeli, could give her. Dean Wellesley advised her for twenty-eight years (1854–82).

The first three Archbishops of Canterbury in the Queen's reign—William Howley, John Bird Sumner, Charles Thomas Longley—are little more than names in history. The fourth, Tait, was a more remarkable man. A Scotsman, undergraduate, Fellow and Tutor of Balliol, he became successively Headmaster of Rugby, Dean of Carlisle, Bishop of London and, in 1868, Archbishop of Canterbury. He was appointed on the "advice" of Disraeli, then Prime Minister, although Disraeli wanted Bishop Ellicott of Gloucester and Bristol to

[1] This quotation is from one of the earliest letters of the Queen to the Rev. R. T. Davidson, 20th December 1882, when Davidson was chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury. Bell, *Randall Davidson* (1935), i. p. 61.

be nominated, and only gave in when the Queen pressed him in favour of Tait. Dr Tait ruled the Church with firmness and moderation and without any serious troubles until his death in 1882. With a view to the appointment of a new Archbishop, the Queen, though she would have to be advised by the Prime Minister (Mr Gladstone), made certain inquiries through the late Archbishop's chaplain, Randall Davidson. At first she wished to have as Archbishop Dr Harold Browne, Bishop of Winchester, who was seventy-one years old. Mr Gladstone wanted Dr Benson, Bishop of Truro, who was fifty-three. The Queen entrusted young Mr Davidson, who was thirty-five, to find out if Dr Browne's health and strength were adequate to the duties of the Archbishopric.[1] After Davidson had visited Farnham and talked with Bishop Browne's wife, the Queen agreed with Mr Gladstone, and Dr Benson became Archbishop of Canterbury. Almost at the same time, the Dean of Windsor (not Wellesley, but Connor, his successor, who was only Dean for six months) died. The Queen wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury:

> "Alas! I have now lost almost all of those who were associated in any way with my altered and saddened life since Decr. '61 (when the Prince Consort died), and I must look around for other helps. It is however therefore *most* important, nay *imperative*, that I should *find someone*, who possesses a kindly sympathetic nature—who could be a comfort to me, now that I get older, and have been sorely stricken as Mr Davidson can tell you. . . .
>
> "The appointment of the Dean of Windsor would go through the Prime Minister, but it is *understood* that I should select him."

The Queen let the Archbishop know that she would like to have either Mr Davidson or Mr Boyd Carpenter a Canon of Windsor (later Bishop of Ripon). Dr Benson recommended Mr Davidson. "A sounder head and warmer heart I do not know." So Davidson became Dean of Windsor (June 1883), and the confidential adviser of the Queen.

The Dean of Windsor had to attend on the Queen not only at Windsor but wherever she was, though not continuously. And the Queen, though she lived a retired life (more retired than her subjects liked), moved about a good deal. She spent alternate periods of a couple of months or a month at Windsor and Osborne, with a long spell in the summer at Balmoral. She hardly used Buckingham Palace at all after the Prince Consort's death, for she preferred the quiet and seclusion of the Isle of Wight, the Highlands, Windsor. Dr Davidson first went to Osborne in January 1883. He arrived at 6 p.m. and was summoned to the Queen in the evening. Davidson noted in his diary:

> "At 7.45 I went to see the Queen. She received me in a dressing-room. Washing-stand, towels, hot water in a kettle—looking-glass, brushes, etc., and a set of nice

[1] Bell, *Life of Davidson*, i. p. 180.

pictures—miniatures, etc. about the room. She stood all the time (about 20 minutes) I was with her."

The Queen spoke with great animation about various clergy, and very frankly. Next time she spoke to him it was about the sermon he had preached in the drawing-room service which was held at Osborne.

The position of confidential adviser of the Queen in ecclesiastical appointments which the Dean of Windsor held was one of great delicacy, because "officially" no such adviser was supposed to exist. In theory, and to a large extent in practice, the Queen accepted the advice of the Prime Minister. The communications between the Queen and the Dean of Windsor were not recognised. Davidson writes:

> "A kind of conventional reticence was observed between herself and the Prime Minister about those communications with me which were not supposed to exist although Lord Rosebery, I remember, when Prime Minister, made no bones about it. . . .
>
> "Sometimes I advised her to accept nominations which did not seem to me to be very good ones, but I never scrupled to advise her to veto nominations if they were really unsuitable or bad, and during my years of advising her the veto was exercised a great many times." [1]

It appears that from the earliest times the Crown in England had more voice in the appointment of bishops than in any other country of Western Christendom. With the rise of the office of Prime Minister, however, another voice became important. Davidson explained this to the Queen as follows:

> "I always tried to impress upon her that the Prime Minister of his day holds office because he is the man the English people want to have in that position, and therefore we are bound to regard his judgment as expressing the contemporary judgment of the nation as a whole. This, though she admitted its truth, she used to regard as a rather troublesome dogma of mine. 'Lord Palmerston with Shaftesbury at his elbow, was a very different adviser,' she used to say, 'than Lord Salisbury or Mr Gladstone.' But she agreed that, for the time being, the Prime Minister's opinion, if persisted in, must be taken as the *vox populi*, so far as we could get it."

"Lord Salisbury on many occasions," Davidson writes, "consented without a murmur to the Queen's veto to some suggestion which he made." When a new appointment had to be made to the Bishopric of Durham in 1890, the Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury, wanted Dr Ridding, Bishop of Southwell, but the Queen wanted Dr Westcott, the famous Biblical scholar and Canon of Westminster. The Queen won. Just after this, Dean Davidson dined at Windsor Castle and noted in his journal:

> "Much talk with the Queen about the Bishoprics, etc. She is greatly amused by Lord Salisbury's jubilation with which [sic] Westcott's appointment is received. He talks as if he had done it, instead of having opposed it with all his might for weeks!" [2]

[1] Bell, *Life of Davidson*, i. p. 165. [2] *Ibid.* p. 181.

The position of confidential adviser to the Queen required, if it was to be properly discharged, not only tact, but courage. The Queen had published two successive volumes of *Leaves from the Journal of our Life in the Highlands.* In 1884 she contemplated publishing a third volume, and had the manuscript sent to Davidson for his opinion. There was a good deal about the Queen's private grief in the previous *Leaves* which Davidson thought had helped to create sympathy between the Queen and the people. But if a third volume were issued, certain elements of the people might not "shew themselves worthy of these confidences." Davidson, in a long, carefully drafted, complimentary letter to the Queen, certainly tactfully but quite unmistakably, advised against publication. "I feel I should be wanting in honest duty to Your Majesty, who has honoured me with some measure of confidence, were I not to refer to this." The Queen was deeply hurt, demanded an apology, and for a fortnight would not see Davidson. At last, however (Davidson writes), "she sent for me on a matter of a totally different nature, and was more friendly than ever, and we have never heard another word about the proposed book."[1]

There is a story, probably apocryphal, to illustrate how Lord Beaconsfield might have, had he been alive in 1884, treated this subject. As reported it is a conversation between Lord Beaconsfield at an earlier date, after the publication of the first book, and is as follows:

THE QUEEN: *What is your favourite book, Lord Beaconsfield?*

BEACONSFIELD: *The Bible, ma'am, the Bible.*

THE QUEEN (a little taken aback): *Yes, yes, of course, the Bible; but after that, Lord Beaconsfield?*

BEACONSFIELD: *Since Your Majesty asks me,* "Leaves from the Journal of our Life in the Highlands."

Davidson left Windsor on becoming Bishop of Rochester in 1891. The Queen continued to ask his advice about the ecclesiastical patronage of the Crown. A cipher was arranged for telegraphic communications between them. Dr Benson, Archbishop of Canterbury, died in 1896. By this time Davidson had been transferred from Rochester to the see of Winchester. The Queen wished him to be made Archbishop in Benson's place. Lord Salisbury, however, thought Davidson to be not yet of sufficiently mature age at forty-eight. He recommended Dr Temple, Bishop of London, who was seventy-five. The Queen yielded to Lord Salisbury's arguments. Dr Davidson was attending a lecture on behalf of the Home Reading Union at his episcopal palace, Farnham, when a telegram was handed to him. It was from the Queen, but in cipher. Davidson, without leaving the room, worked out the cipher with pencil and paper, and was later complimented on taking such careful notes of the lecture.

[1] Bell, *Life of Davidson*, i. p. 93–94.

The telegram read:

"BALMORAL, *24th October* 1896.

"Somewhat to my surprise London has accepted Canterbury.

"V., *R.I.*"

Dr Temple, though seventy-five years old, had six years of work before him. He died on 23rd December 1902. The Queen had died the previous year, and nomination now lay with King Edward VII. The Prime Minister, Mr Balfour, proposed the name of Randall Davidson to the King, who at once acceded to this recommendation. Davidson was then fifty-four years of age. His long tenure of the Archbishopric is an epoch in the history of the Church of England.

Although appointments of bishops lie with the Crown, acting on the advice of the Prime Minister, the procedure established by the Act of 1534 (25 Henry VIII. cap. 20) is that the Crown sends to the Cathedral Chapter of the vacant See a licence to elect (*congé d'élire*) containing the name of the person whom they shall elect. The Chapter can refuse to do so, but would thereby incur the penalties of the "Great Statute" of Præmunire of 1393, penalties comprising forfeiture of goods and chattels and imprisonment during the king's pleasure. There have been no instances of refusal to elect since the Reformation. The patronage of the Church (including appointment of deans and certain other clergy) is the chief element in the "Establishment."

If the reign of Queen Victoria, by reason of the eminent men among the clergymen whose names were household words, was a sort of golden age of the Church of England, it can be said that the free churches had likewise a distinguished history. The principle of "Church Establishment," was abandoned by a large section of the Scottish people when in 1843 Dr Chalmers led a secession from the Established (Presbyterian) Church of Scotland. This "Disruption," as it is called, which led to the creation of the Free Church of Scotland, lasted for ninety years. In 1933 the disrupted Presbyterian communions reunited themselves in the Church of Scotland. The Protestant establishment in Ireland was given up by Act of Parliament in 1869, Queen Victoria consenting with great reluctance. She wrote (31st January 1869): "Mr Gladstone knows that the Queen has always regretted that he should have thought himself compelled to raise this question as he has done." Nevertheless, she supported him with advice and indeed encouragement when the Bill was before Parliament.

The most outstanding personality among the free churches was Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834–92), Baptist minister of the Metropolitan Tabernacle in Newington Butts, South London. He was the most famous preacher of the last half of the nineteenth century, his sermons being heard by congregations of 5000 or 6000; on one occasion, during the Indian Mutiny, he preached to 24,000 people at the Crystal Palace. His sermons, preached extempore from half a sheet of notepaper, were taken down in shorthand and published week by

week. Their normal circulation was 20,000. Stopford Brooke, a minister of the Church of England, greatly appreciated as a preacher for sermons of a high literary quality, left the Church in 1880. He continued, nevertheless, to preach in his proprietary chapel in Bloomsbury to a crowded congregation, which always included numerous strangers. The high level of preaching in the reign of Queen Victoria was doubtless to some considerable degree due to the Queen's interest in sermons and to the frank judgments which she expressed about them. Apart from Spurgeon, whose sermons in print have not stood the test of time, the greatest preacher was Frederick William Robertson, a Church of England minister of Brighton. Though only six years in his charge at Brighton (1847–53) his fame was widespread, and his sermons have been read throughout the whole English-speaking world. In the last years of Queen Victoria, the sermon as a work of finished eloquence and high thought had a master in Dr Boyd Carpenter, Bishop of Ripon, formerly Canon of Windsor, a friend of Queen Victoria. He preached, without a note, sermons unsurpassed for harmonious construction and literary diction.

The Victorian Age had some great hymn-writers, or at any rate it produced some great hymns. Newman's "Lead, Kindly Light"[1] and Baring Gould's "Onward, Christian Soldiers" each in a different way make perennial appeal to the spirit of man. The finest, the most delicate, most reflective and musical religious poem of the age is Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, published in 1850. The haunting music of the verse, the religious calm which pervaded the poem, the friendship and affection, the wide humanity of *In Memoriam* appealed to every man and woman of the reign. No boy or girl could go through school without some knowledge of it, and none read it without being impressed. How many read *In Memoriam* now? All would benefit from a return to this pure well of quiet thought.

It has been said that English music, splendid in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, had gone to sleep since the death of Purcell (1695). In the later years of Queen Victoria's reign there was a genuine renaissance of English music, beginning with Sterndale Bennett (1816–75,) and continued with originality of treatment by Sullivan (1842–1900)—the greatest of composers of comic opera, by Villiers Stanford (1852–1924) also by a great teacher of music, Hubert Parry (1848–1918). The Promenade Concerts inaugurated by Henry Wood in the 'nineties made classical music familiar to Londoners and visitors to London, and greatly contributed to educate musical taste.

[1] Newman's "Lead, Kindly Light" was published shortly before Queen Victoria's reign began, in *Lyra Apostolica*, 1834. The date of the publication of "Onward, Christian Soldiers" was 1864.

CHAPTER V

THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING PEOPLES

THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH of Nations is a creation of the Victorian Age. The previous age had not learned much from the loss of the American colonies in 1782. The remaining old British colonies and the new ones, of which the chief were in Australia, were administered scarcely more intelligently than the American colonies had been. It was the Durham Report of 1839 that inaugurated the principle of responsible self-government in the British Empire, and this led to the establishing of " Dominion Status," and the sovereign states of the Commonwealth of Nations.

The first colony to undergo rapid development in Queen Victoria's reign was Cape Colony. The great reform, the emancipation of the slaves, made in 1833, affected chiefly the Cape and the West Indies. In 1836 a number of Cape Dutch farmers with their families started on the Great Trek and crossed the Orange River and took up land. Thus Queen Victoria's reign began in 1837 with expansion (though not encouraged by the Government) into the Orange River Territory. From there parties moved east into Natal, which was declared to be a British colony in 1842. It was not until 1848 that the Orange River Territory was officially declared to be a British colony. Sir Harry Smith, Governor of Cape Colony, who came up country to take possession of the territory, was met with some resistance and had to fight a small battle at Boomplats. He received a slight wound. The Queen wrote to Earl Grey, Secretary of State for the Colonies (26th October 1848) :

> The Queen has received Lord Grey's letter, and is glad to hear that Sir H. Smith's wound was not of a serious nature. The loss of so many officers, the Queen is certain, proceeds from their wearing a blue coat whilst the men are in scarlet ; the Austrian lost a great proportion of officers in Italy from a similar difference of dress.

This remark about the officers' uniform, though justified as a general criticism, did not really apply to the troops at Boomplats, where most of the officers, including Sir Harry Smith himself, wore the uniform of the Cape Rifles of the same colour as the men's.

After the battle of Boomplats, farmers from the Orange River Colony crossed the Vaal River and founded the South African Republic. The British Government recognised this republic by the Sand River Convention of 1852 ; and in 1854 (Convention of Bloemfontein) it renounced its claim to the territory

between the Orange and Vaal rivers (Orange River Territory) which then became the Orange Free State. Those doings were very remote from Windsor, but the Queen inquired into them and received an interesting report. This stated that the existence of two independent states might endanger the security of British dominions in South Africa, but the Colonial Office held that this danger " seems very remote."

In the first half of the nineteenth century there had been a number of Kaffir wars, but after 1830 there was peace in South Africa for nearly thirty years. During those years the " Dark Continent " was being explored by travellers, traders, and missionaries. The greatest missionary was David Livingstone, who went to Bechuanaland for the London Missionary Society in 1841. In 1852–54 he crossed Africa from east to west, most of the way on foot. His last journey, when he explored Lake Tanganyika, was made in 1866–73.

In 1854 Burton and Speke, sent out by the Royal Geographical Society, discovered Lakes Tanganyika and Victoria Nyanza; and in 1864 Samuel Baker and his wife discovered another great inland sea, which received the name of Lake Albert Nyanza. The greatest (or the greatest after Livingstone) of the African explorers of the Victorian Age was H. M. Stanley, who did much to open up Uganda and the Congo regions in 1874. In 1889 he made his most famous expedition into Central Africa, successfully, to find Emin Pasha, a German, who had been Governor of Equatorial Africa for the Khedive of Egypt.

In 1877 the British Government in which Disraeli (Lord Beaconsfield) was Prime Minister and Lord Carnarvon, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, was convinced that the time had come for a federation of the South African colonies and the independent Orange Free State and South African Republic. This was only to be accomplished by mutual consent; Sir Bartle Frere, whose administrative work had lain chiefly in India (though he had some experience of East Africa), was sent to South Africa as Governor of Cape Colony in 1877 to promote federation. The Queen was informed of all this, and approved of it. At this time the South African Republic (Transvaal) was in a bad way, pressed hard by Zulu tribes, and absolutely without funds. On 8th April 1877 it was annexed to the British Crown by agreement between President Burgess of the republic and Sir Theophilus Shepstone, H.M. Commissioner for Native Affairs in Natal. President Burgess consented to the annexation, whilst High Commissioner Shepstone, on his side, agreed that the President should issue a formal protest against annexation. The Boer President assisted in drafting a proclamation of annexation, and submitted to the British High Commission the document of protest. Out of this piece of hypocrisy there soon came a fatal result.

H. von Angeli.

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VICTORIA.

The Commission's plea for a federation made no further progress. The Zulus continued to press upon the Transvaal and Natal, but the British Cabinet was against taking military action which, however, Frere began on his own authority; he believed, probably with good reason, that Natal might be overwhelmed. In the ensuing campaign a British force of eight hundred men was destroyed by the Zulus in Isandhlwana (22nd January 1879), a disaster partly retrieved at the defence of Rorke's Drift on the Tugela River where there was a temporary hospital and a garrison of eighty soldiers. Later in the year the Zulu army was broken up at the battle of Ulundi (4th July 1879).

Lord Beaconsfield's government was defeated at the General Election of March 1880, and Mr Gladstone became Prime Minister. He decided to recall Frere from South Africa. The Queen was against this decision, and she wrote to Mr Gladstone (30th July 1880):

> The Queen fears that the recall of Sir Bartle Frere will create an impression that Governors abroad are only to expect support at home from political allies, or from that party which nominated them to their posts.

The Queen accepted the advice of the Prime Minister, and Frere returned home. He was invited to Balmoral. The Queen noted in her journal (6th October 1880):

> After luncheon we saw poor Sir Bartle Frere, who had come to Abergeldie yesterday, and had only just arrived from the Cape. I told him how much I felt for him—and how entirely I had approved of his conduct; for which he expressed great gratitude.

Evidently the Queen was not showing any ardour in supporting Mr Gladstone's colonial policy. Nor did the next year's events incline her to change her attitude. The Boers of the Transvaal might have been content to live under the British Crown if they had been given a system of self-government as Frere recommended. They became, however, impatient at delay, and rose in revolt. In December 1880, and January and February 1881, a series of small military operations took place in which the Boers showed great aptitude for fighting in the peculiar conditions of South African country. On 27th February 1881, General Sir George Colley with 359 men was defeated—the general himself being killed—at Majuba Hill in the extreme north of Natal. The Prime Minister, Mr Gladstone, had never been in favour of the annexation of the South African Republic. As long as there was a chance of bringing about confederation in South Africa he was prepared to keep the Transvaal under the Crown. But confederation was dead by this time. It is not known for certain when he made up his mind that independence should be restored to the Transvaal, but it was probably before the battle of Majuba Hill. He did not now see why more blood should be shed before he should do something which he meant to do anyhow. Accordingly,

as the Boers were ready to make terms, he agreed to negotiate; and the independence of the Transvaal was recognised by the Anglo-Boer Convention of Pretoria, 3rd August 1881, and the Convention of London, 27th February 1884. The only limitation on the independence restored to the South African Republic was in regard to foreign relations; it was debarred from concluding treaties with any state, other than the Orange Free State, without consent of the British Government.

Opinion concerning Mr Gladstone's retrocession of independence to the Transvaal has varied greatly from time to time. Probably the balance is now in his favour. The Queen was adverse to his decision, though she had to consent to it. On 9th March 1881, after news of the battle of Majuba Hill, she wrote to Lord Kimberley, Secretary of State for the Colonies: "I am sure that even the semblance of any concessions after our recent defeats would have a deplorable effect." Two days later she instructed her private secretary, Sir Henry Ponsonby, to "cipher" to Mr Gladstone and other ministers "the *impossibility* of listening to demands for independence or entering into terms with the Boers while they are in Natal." The Boer forces accepted an armistice and left Natal, so this condition urged by the Queen was fulfilled. The Queen, however, was not satisfied in her mind and informed the Secretary of State for the Colonies that she gave her consent only with reluctance to the rest of the terms.[1] The years 1879–81 in South Africa were unfortunate for everybody concerned. In the Zulu War the Prince Imperial (only son of the late Emperor Napoleon III. and Empress Eugénie), who was a cadet at Woolwich, went out as a volunteer with the British forces and was killed by Zulus on 1st June 1879. The Queen noted the tragedy in her journal (19th June 1879).

> I feel a thrill of horror in even writing it. I kept on saying, "No, no, it can't be! To die in such an awful way is too shocking! Poor dear Empress! Her only child, her *all*, gone! I am really in despair. He was such an amiable, good young man, who would have made such a good Emperor for France one day."

No sooner were the Zulu and Transvaal troubles settled than serious trouble arose in Egypt.

The strong interest which the British people feel in regard to Egypt dates only from the year 1875 when Disraeli made the celebrated purchase of Suez Canal shares. The Queen noted in her journal (27th November 1875) after receipt of the Prime Minister's dispatch-box:

> Received a box from Mr Disraeli with the very important news that the Government has purchased the Viceroy of Egypt's shares in the Suez Canal for four millions, which gives us complete security for India, and altogether places us in a very safe

[1] *Letters of Queen Victoria*, second series (1928), iii. p. 203.

position. An immense thing. It is entirely Mr Disraeli's doing. Only three or four days ago I heard of the offer and at once supported and encouraged him, when at that moment it seemed doubtful, and then to-day all has been satisfactorily settled.

So far so good. Next year, however, the Khedive (or Viceroy) of Egypt suspended payment on the Egyptian Public Debt. This had nothing to do with the Suez Canal, but it brought loss to the foreign bondholders, chiefly French and English. To protect their rights a Franco-British control was established in the office of the Egyptian Public Debt. The British representative on the Debt from 1878 to 1880 (when he left to become financial member of the Council of the Viceroy of India) was Major Evelyn Baring. In 1881 there was a mutiny or revolt, raised by Colonel Arabi Pasha, in the Egyptian army, partly, at any rate, in protest against foreign control in Egypt. In 1882 the trouble broke out again. On 11th June fifty Europeans were massacred in Alexandria. Admiral Seymour bombarded the insurgent batteries and silenced them. Mr Gladstone's Cabinet decided that a military force must be landed in Egypt to restore order. It invited the French Government to co-operate. Gambetta would have agreed. He had been strongly in favour of Anglo-French co-operation in Egypt. This statesman, however, was no longer in office. His successor, Freycinet, refused to intervene in Egypt. A British expeditionary force of 13,000 men destroyed Arabi's power at Tel-el-Kebir on 13th September 1882. The British troops were then withdrawn from Egypt. Evelyn Baring returned from India to Egypt as British agent and consul-general and entered upon a historic administrative career there of twenty-three years.

The Egyptian Government was insolvent and feeble, yet it still nominally held the Sudan and had a number of garrisons in that country which was rapidly falling into the hands of the native tribes led by the Moslem "prophet," the Mahdi. The Egyptian Government, with the consent of the British Cabinet, appointed General Gordon governor-general of the Sudan with the duty of arranging evacuation of the garrisons and other officials from the province.

Gordon went out to Egypt in January 1884 and made his way up the Nile to Khartoum. In May 1884 the Mahdist forces were beginning to draw round Khartoum, and Gordon was practically cut off. A British expeditionary force was sent to relieve him, but not until four months had passed. Wolseley was not sent out to Egypt until September. The advance of the force began on 5th October. The advance columns struggled into Khartoum on 28th January 1885, but the town had fallen, and Gordon had been killed on 26th January.

When the Queen heard of this she noted in her journal (5th February 1885):

The Government is alone to blame, by refusing to send the expedition until it is too late. Telegraphed *en clair* to Mr Gladstone, Lord Granville, and Lord Hartington.

The telegram, *en clair* (that is, not in cipher) was :

> These news from Khartoum are frightful, and to think that all this might have been prevented and many precious lives saved by earlier action is too frightful.

Mr Gladstone did not receive this message meekly. He replied at once :

> Mr Gladstone has had the honour this day to receive your Majesty's telegram *en clair*, relating to the deplorable intelligence received this day from Lord Wolseley, and stating that it is too fearful to consider that the fall of Khartoum might have been prevented and many precious lives saved by earlier action.
>
> Mr Gladstone does not presume to estimate the means of judgment possessed by your Majesty, but so far as his information and his recollection at the moment go, he is not altogether able to follow the conclusion which your Majesty has been pleased thus to announce.

The rest of the letter amplified this point of view.

The Queen, on her side, did not receive this rebuke submissively. She wrote to her private secretary (17th February 1885) :

> Mr Gladstone and the Government *have*—the Queen *feels it dreadfully*—Gordon's innocent, noble, heroic blood on their consciences, and all this has made the Queen *ill*.

She developed a high temperature, accompanied by coughing. She instructed Sir Henry Ponsonby to inquire of Mr Gladstone and " any other members of the Government " whether they had written to condole with Miss Gordon, the General's sister. The Prime Minister's private secretary replied that " the question of making some communication to Miss Gordon had not escaped Mr Gladstone's consideration."

The Egyptian Government now had to abandon the Sudan, but the British troops remained in Egypt. A curious system was developed there by which the British agent and consul-general, Baring (Lord Cromer), assisted by a staff of British officials, gave advice, and the Egyptian ministers followed it. In effect, Cromer administered Egypt which undeniably thus made enormous advances in every department of Government. In 1898 an Anglo-Egyptian army under General Kitchener reconquered the Sudan and established Anglo-Egyptian administration.

In 1922 the British Government recognised the independence of Egypt, reserving however to its own discretion four points : security of the communications of the British Empire in Egypt ; the defence of Egypt against aggression ; protection of foreign interests and minorities ; the Sudan. The British garrison remained in Cairo. In 1936, after years of intermittent negotiation, a Treaty of Alliance was concluded between Great Britain and Egypt. This provided for the maintenance of a British garrison in the Suez Canal Zone (not in Cairo) ; for a share to be taken by Egypt in the garrisoning of the Sudan which remained

an Anglo-Egyptian "condominium;" for support by Great Britain to an application on the part of Egypt to enter the League of Nations. The outstanding feature of the treaty was the alliance established between Great Britain and Egypt, henceforward to be free and equal partners, recognising their dependence upon each other, their direct interest in each other's security, by reason of their peculiar political position in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Canal Zone, the Red Sea. The Italian conquest of Abyssinia had a good deal to do with this happy solution of the "Egyptian Question."

North America came more and more into the affairs of England as the reign continued. Canada developed from the two provinces of the Durham Report to the Dominion of 1867. The powers thus established for Canada in the British North America Act of this year became the pattern of "Dominion Status" all over the Empire. The Queen suffered greatly at sea, and found even the passage to Ireland extremely troublesome. She never crossed the Atlantic; but the Prince of Wales (subsequently King Edward VII.) visited Canada in 1860.

With the United States the Queen's Government had at first cool relations which developed very considerable friction in 1846 (Oregon) and 1861 (the Civil War) and then gradually improved until genuine and permanent cordiality was established in the last years of the reign, although there was something of a "scare" in 1895–97 over Venezuela. The Oregon question was an old one, for since about 1818 the British and United States Governments had been joint possessors of this land which at that time comprised the present territory of the state of Oregon and much of British Columbia. By 1846 it was clear to everybody that the British-American "condominium," practicable only when the land was frequented merely by hunters and a few traders, must now be given up. A sharp dispute arose over the division of the British (that is, Canadian) and the United States area, but at last a treaty signed by the British minister, Pakenham, and the Secretary of State, Buchanan, at Washington on 15th June 1846, settled the frontier line. If the United States received somewhat unexpectedly the whole of the Columbia River, the British received the whole of the island of Vancouver. The news of the signature of the Pakenham-Buchanan treaty, which was in doubt almost up to the last moment, arrived at London on the same day (29th June 1846) as the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel, made his speech, announcing the resignation of the Government, in the House of Commons. He wrote to the Queen: "The defeat of the Government on the day on which they carried the Corn Bill, and the receipt of the intelligence on the day on which they resign, are singular coincidences." The Government had been defeated on 25th June, the day on which the Corn Laws Repeal Bill passed the House of Lords. It resigned on 29th June.

In the last year of Mr Buchanan's presidency, the Prince of Wales visited

the United States, where he won golden opinions. Next year, shortly after the inauguration of President Lincoln, the attack upon the Union garrison of Fort Sumter, North Carolina, on 12th April 1861, precipitated the American Civil War. On 8th November (1861) a British steamship, *Trent*, carrying mail and passengers from Havana to England, was stopped by a Northern (Union) warship. Two officials or delegates of the Southern (rebel) States, Messrs. Mason and Slidell, and two companions, were taken off the *Trent* into captivity by the captain of the Union warship.

This action produced a most serious crisis as the British Government was unable to condone the seizure of any passengers, whatever their status, on a British ship, which is British territory—exactly as an American ship was always claimed by the United States Government as American territory. The crisis proceeded on a disturbing and depressing course until the Government, of which Lord Palmerston was Prime Minister and Lord John Russell (created Earl Russell) Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, decided to send a dispatch demanding the release of the Southern deputies and an apology from the United States. "In case these requirements should be refused (Earl Russell explained to the Queen on 29th November 1861), Lord Lyons should ask for his passports."

It is a well-known fact that a Great Power never accepts an ultimatum. Though the United States was riven by Civil War, its Government would not admit any diminution of its prestige. The dispatch which Earl Russell submitted to the Queen on 29th November 1861, preparatory to sending it to Washington, would inevitably have been rejected by President Abraham Lincoln. It peremptorily demanded (1) the liberation of the four gentlemen captured; (2) an apology for the insult offered to the British Flag. The Queen and Prince Consort read the dispatch and said at once that it would not do. The Prince, with a shaking hand (for he was dying), drafted an alternative version:

> Her Majesty's Government, bearing in mind the friendly relations which have long subsisted between Great Britain and the United States, are willing to believe that the United States naval officer who committed this aggression was not acting in compliance with any authority from his Government, or that if he conceived himself to be so authorised, he greatly misunderstood the instructions which he had received.

The Queen returned the dispatch with this alternative version, and a gentle recommendation to accept it, to Earl Russell. Fortunately, Earl Russell agreed, and the amended dispatch was sent to Washington and was accepted by President Lincoln, who at once gave orders for the release of the captives. The colossal tragedy of a British-American war was averted and (history seems to show) was averted for ever.

The Prince Consort, great gentleman and statesman, died at Windsor after a week's illness on 14th December 1861. He was only forty-two years old. The "Trent Dispatch" was the best thing he ever wrote.

The long-drawn-out American Civil War ended on 9th April 1865 with the surrender of General Robert E. Lee, Commander-in-Chief of the troops of the seceding Southern States. Six days after this, President Abraham Lincoln was assassinated at Washington. The awful tragedy, which appalled the people of the United States, called forth the sympathy of the English people. Queen Victoria wrote an obviously spontaneous, heartfelt letter to Mrs. Lincoln (29th April 1865).

> DEAR MADAM,—Though a stranger to you, I cannot remain silent when so terrible a calamity has fallen upon you and your country, and must express personally my deep and heartfelt sympathy with you under the shocking circumstances of your present dreadful misfortune.
>
> No one can better appreciate than I can, who am myself utterly broken-hearted by the loss of my own beloved husband, who was the light of my life, my stay, my all, what your sufferings must be; and I earnestly pray that you may be supported by Him to Whom alone the sorely stricken can look for comfort in this hour of heavy affliction!

This letter was made public and was felt throughout the United States to be a great act of friendship. The consolidation of the United States by the end of the Civil War was followed in Canada by the coming into force of the British North America Act (1867) federating all the British Colonies in North America (except Newfoundland) into the Dominion of Canada. Nearly three thousand miles of frontier with the United States were (and are), by an understanding dating from the year 1817, totally unfortified. The political relations between the British Empire and the United States remained uneventful, though not particularly cordial until 1895. By that year a dispute between Great Britain and Venezuela concerning the frontier of British Guiana had become acute. It was not that Great Britain and Venezuela were likely to go to war over their frontier; but the dispute, which involved a vast area of territory, scarcely inhabited and never thoroughly surveyed, seemed to have become insoluble. Suddenly the United States Government, claiming a kind of protectorate over all the Americas under the "Monroe Doctrine," intervened in the dispute. Mr Richard Olney, United States Secretary of State, wrote in a despatch to Lord Salisbury, the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (20th July 1895): "To-day the United States is practically sovereign in this continent, and its fiat is law upon the subjects to which it confines its interposition." A little later, 17th December, Mr Grover Cleveland, President of the United States, in a message to Congress, called upon the British Government to agree to a "true divisional line" between Venezuela and British Guiana: otherwise the United States would determine what was the true divisional line itself.

When Great Powers (or rather the governments of Great Powers) begin

to talk to each other in this way, it nearly always ends in war, for Great Powers simply cannot bring themselves to yield to each other; they would rather die first. Thus everything was staged for a war between Great Britain and the United States, except for one thing: that nobody on either side of the Atlantic wanted a war; in fact, everybody, or nearly everybody, as far as can be judged from sermons, newspapers, and letters, was horrified at the idea. So the two Governments remained in an apparently hopeless diplomatic impasse for nearly two years, when a compromise was at last arranged and the disputed British-Venezuelan territory was divided, after arbitration.

The British Royal Family had taken a great interest in the dispute. Social relations between British and American society were becoming well established in the last ten or fifteen years of the nineteenth century; the Royal Family, as leaders of British society, were anything but oblivious of the social relations. The Queen was now (1897), at seventy-eight years of age, unable to take much active part in social affairs; but the Prince of Wales had travelled in the United States, and was known personally to many of the Americans who came nearly every year to England. When the dispute about the Venezuelan boundary was settled, the political relations between Great Britain and the United States rapidly improved, and the social relations grew better and better. When, in 1898, the United States and Spain became involved in war about the Spanish colony of Cuba, the British people, alone in Europe, showed sympathy with the American side. John Hay, United States Ambassador in London, wrote to his friend, Henry Cabot Lodge, that the Royal Family, though "most careful not to break the strict rules of neutrality," showed great tenderness and, "so far as is consistent with propriety," sympathy. The attitude in the drawing-rooms was "all that could be desired."

In the year after the Spanish-American War the British Empire became involved in war in South Africa, the "Boer War" of 1899–1902. Opinion in the United States was, as might be expected, divided in regard to this struggle, but the State Department, then directed by John Hay (transferred from the London Embassy to Washington in October 1898), was decidedly friendly. One of the last things which tended to keep the two governments, and also the two peoples, apart, was cleared away in 1901 when the Panama Canal Treaty was signed at Washington by Lord Pauncefote, British Ambassador, and John Hay, Secretary of State. This treaty recognised the right of the United States to construct, own, and control a canal across the Isthmus of Panama, subject to the canal being open to the ships of all nations at all times upon equal terms. The transformation of sentiment—for it was nothing less —in the relations of Great Britain and the United States, which took place in the Queen's reign, was the most important development in its foreign affairs. The reign had begun in an atmosphere, on both sides, partly of indifference,

partly of estrangement. Charles Dickens's *American Letters*, published in 1842, embittered the Americans. The Oregon Boundary dispute, in 1846, with its "Jingoist" (American) refrain, "Fifty-four forty or fight," [1] shows how dreadfully embittered and reckless people were, and not only on the American side. Sixteen years later, in 1861, during the American Civil War, the *Trent* affair brought the two peoples, British and American, to the verge of conflict; and next year the escape of the *Alabama*, which was constructed in Messrs. Laird's shipyards at Birkenhead and became the great commerce destroyer in the command of the Southern States, further exasperated the relations of Great Britain and America. And now, by the end of the century, all this was, if not forgotten, at any rate forgiven; and an enduring *entente* unofficial, yet implicitly recognised in the Foreign Office and Department of State, and stronger than a treaty, was a fact.

The conflict in South Africa between Britain and Boer did not interrupt the course of development of the British Empire towards ever greater degrees of self-government. In 1900 the Australian Commonwealth Act federated the Australian states, as the British North American Act federated the Canadian provinces in 1867. The Australian Commonwealth Act created a federation of a rather different type from the Canadian, with more power left to the constituent states, and a different allocation of functions to the Central Government. The principle, however, in either case, was the same: in 1867 all Canada became a "Dominion," and in 1900 all Australia, called a Commonwealth, became a Dominion too, with a Governor-General appointed by the British Crown, but accepting advice from the Dominion cabinet.

Within a year after the Australian Commonwealth Act went through the British Parliament, Queen Victoria died at Osborne, Tuesday, 22nd January 1901. No British sovereign was ever more familiar in the mind and eye of the people. Not that this familiarity had existed continuously throughout the reign. At first the young Queen had established herself and her husband and children in the mind and the eye of the people. Then, after the death of the Prince Consort, she had withdrawn in a mourning court, and became what Rudyard Kipling called "The Widow of Windsor." Not indeed until about 1880 did Queen Victoria resume a more active way of life in public. From then onwards, however, she steadily advanced in the affections of the British people, and moved about in Great Britain (and from time to time in Ireland) down to the end of her long life. In 1887, and again in 1897, "Jubilee" celebrations were held, the last being given the curious name (which captivated the popular mind) of "Diamond Jubilee." The 1887 Jubilee was somewhat

[1] The U.S. Government claimed, quite extravagantly, Oregon northwards to latitude 54.40°. The British claimed southwards to latitude 49°. The British claim (which is now recognised as favourable to the U.S.) was satisfied in the final treaty—Buchanan-Pakenham treaty of 25th June 1846.

spoiled by wet weather. The 1897 one was held in perfect summer conditions. All the Empire seemed to be in London for those halcyon and joyous days; and the magnificent pageantry to which London, with all its historic associations and brilliant society is so well adapted, stirred the hearts and impressed the imagination of all the British peoples.

CHAPTER VI

THE LATER PRIME MINISTERS AND QUEEN VICTORIA

IN 1868 BENJAMIN DISRAELI, at the age of sixty-three, attained the object of his ambitions by becoming Prime Minister, on the retirement of his chief, Lord Derby. The new Prime Minister at once wrote to the Queen that it would be "his delight and duty to render the transaction of affairs as easy to your Majesty as possible." The Queen, who had always been interested in this original and able man, now began to come completely within his influence. In the dreadful loneliness in which she felt that she was living after the Prince Consort's death, Disraeli's sympathy, his interesting letters, his witty but never intrusive conversation, his unfailing tact and understanding, were a great support to her. The two became real friends. As they grew older and lonelier (for Disraeli lost his wife in 1872) their friendship deepened. They could not indeed meet very often. The Queen, though a simple, good woman, had a certain awful dignity about her, which marked her out as sovereign. But they were both great correspondents—the Queen one of the best letter writers in all literature; Disraeli, witty, observant, worldly, yet sentimental, as in his novels. Sometimes they wrote to each other two or three times a day.

Disraeli's first premiership only lasted about ten months. He was defeated in the first General Election held under his own Reform Bill of 1867. Mr Gladstone became Prime Minister, for the first time, at the end of 1868, and held office until 1874. As a leading Whig statesman, he was well known to the Queen, and their personal relations had always been quite good; but as Prime Minister he proved to be antipathetic to her. It was not simply that the Queen disliked his policy: his disestablishment of the Protestant Episcopal Church of Ireland in 1869; his restoration of the Transvaal to the Boers in 1881; and in the same year the evacuation of Kandahar after General Roberts's brilliant relief of that Afghan town and his march from Kabul. The truth is that Gladstone's uncompromising rectitude prevented him from approving of the Queen's seclusion which she still persisted in maintaining, although the Prince Consort had been dead for years. His efforts, which were only occasional advice, to bring her out into public life, irritated her almost beyond endurance. Gladstone thought that the Queen was neurasthenic. The Queen thought him unfeeling. Disraeli (Lord Beaconsfield from 1876) impressed her as everything that was kind and sympathetic. He declared in the House of Commons that the Queen was struggling with ill-health, and was overwhelmed

with work and responsibility. Gladstone (not in public, of course, but in a letter to his wife) called this Disraeli's " usual flunkeyism," and said that " the bulk of Her Majesty's official work is certainly not large."

Gladstone's first Prime Ministry was very fruitful. It produced, besides the Disestablishment of the Church of Ireland (1869), an Irish Land Purchase Act, and the first great Elementary Education Act, both in 1870 ; the abolition of purchase of commissions in the Army (1871) ; the Ballot Act, establishing secrecy of voting (1872) ; the Judicature Act, reorganising the Law Courts on their present system (1873). He was successful also in bringing to an end the controversy with the United States over the question of claims for destruction caused by the British-built ship *Alabama* during the American Civil War ; an Arbitration Tribunal, sitting at Geneva, awarded to the United States damages of £3,000,000. What the Queen undoubtedly relished most in all this was the abolition of purchase in the army, because it could be done by Royal Prerogative. An Act of Parliament of 1809 had made purchase illegal except in so far as it was authorised by regulations made under the Crown. All that was therefore necessary, in order that purchase should be abolished, was that the Queen, by Royal Warrant, should cancel the existing regulations. Accordingly she made no difficulty about accepting Mr Gladstone's advice to do this. The House of Lords had rejected a bill for abolishing purchase. One swallow, however, does not make a summer. When, after losing the General Election of 1874, Mr Gladstone resigned the Prime Ministry, he meant never to take office again. He wrote to a friend, " It is the most sickening piece of experience which I have had during near forty years of public life." He felt that the throne was becoming insecure.

From 1874 to 1880, Disraeli, Lord Beaconsfield, was, for the second and last time, Prime Minister. He at once inaugurated a series of bills for social reform, putting into practice, now that he had the opportunity with an assured majority, the ideas which thirty years earlier he had expressed in *Sybil*. He carried through Parliament an Agricultural Holdings Act, Artisans' Dwellings Act, Merchant Shipping Act, Employers' and Workmen's Act. After his purchase of Suez Canal Shares (1875) the Queen wrote to her secretary, " It is *entirely* the doing of Mr Disraeli." She added, " His mind is so much greater, larger, and his apprehension of things great and small so much quicker than that of Mr Gladstone." When Mr Gladstone published his pamphlet on *Bulgarian Horrors*, and so checked Beaconsfield's policy of upholding the integrity of Turkey, the Queen wrote (2nd February 1877) to Beaconsfield that the ambassador at Constantinople was " astounded at Mr Gladstone, his wildness, folly, and fury." Beaconsfield's own view, as expressed in a letter to Lord Derby, was: " Posterity will do justice to that unprincipled maniac, Gladstone—extraordinary mixture of envy, vindictiveness, hypocrisy and superstition,

and with one commanding characteristic—whether Prime Minister or Leader of Opposition, whether preaching, praying, speechifying or scribbling—never a gentleman." The Queen, who maintained that "*he* (Mr Gladstone) *caused* the Russian (*i.e.* Russo-Turkish) War," stoutly supported the ailing and failing Beaconsfield throughout the Eastern Crisis, and undoubtedly helped him to achieve his "Peace with Honour" at the Congress of Berlin in 1878. When, in the following year, it became fairly clear that Beaconsfield's Government could not last very much longer, the Queen wrote to the Marchioness of Ely: "I never could take Mr Gladstone as my Minister again." As a constitutional monarch, however, she found that she had to take Mr Gladstone as her Prime Minister in 1880; but with regard to another public servant, who had been involved in a divorce case, Sir Charles Dilke, she was quite firm. "I never *could* take Sir C. Dilke as a *minister*." This ended Dilke's useful political career.

The "Midlothian" Campaign of 1880 carried Mr Gladstone into power again. The Eastern Question, and particularly the Bulgarian Horrors, had called him out of his seclusion, and had cancelled his resolution never again to take office. He was Prime Minister for the second time from 1880 to 1885. As long as Lord Beaconsfield was alive (he died in April 1881) the Queen maintained her warm friendship with him. She said to him, shortly after Mr Gladstone had entered into office, "I *never* write except on formal *official* matters to the Prime Minister." Gladstone noted in his diary that the Queen was perfect in her courtesy, but "holds me now at arm's length. . . . I am always outside an iron ring." In private, before Lord Rosebery, he broke out passionately, "The Queen alone is enough to kill any man."[1] She was furious with him when he once suggested that she might postpone for a week or two going to Balmoral, because the people were criticising her retirement; and she threatened (obviously without seriousness) to abdicate. When he made a political speech at Ballater, which is near Balmoral, she wrote to her private secretary (16th September 1884): "The Queen is *utterly* disgusted with his *stump* oratory—so unworthy of his position—almost under her very nose."

Mr Gladstone, at the age of seventy-one, faced a sea of troubles in foreign and colonial affairs: Afghan War, Boer War, Sudanese War. The Tsar Alexander II. of Russia was assassinated in 1881; President Garfield of the United States was assassinated in the same year. Gambetta died at the end of 1882. Bismarck, however, the most dynamic continental statesman of the period, was hale and hearty, and pacific too. The Triple Alliance, which he made with Austria and Italy in 1882, was a steadying factor in European affairs. In domestic affairs the chief trouble was in Ireland, where Lord Frederick Cavendish

[1] The subject is skilfully treated (with an excellent selection of quotations), in Frank Hardie, *The Political Influence of Queen Victoria* (1935), chap. ii.

the Chief Secretary and Mr Burke the Permanent Under-Secretary were murdered, when walking in Phœnix Park, Dublin, by " Invincibles," a political murder club (1882).

The death of Gordon at Khartoum in 1885 only confirmed the Queen in her opinion about what she considered to be Mr Gladstone's pacifism. She warmly admired Lord Wolseley, who commanded the Gordon Relief Expedition; and to Lady Wolseley she wrote a letter which, since its publication in that frank collection, *The Letters of Queen Victoria*, has become justly famous. " I think the Government are *more incorrigible* than ever, and I do think that your husband should hold *strong* language to them, and *even threaten* to resign if he does *not* receive strong support and liberty of action." The Queen must have been very glad when Gladstone resigned in June 1885; but so, no doubt, was Gladstone. He told his colleagues that he found her continual interference, even in quite formal matters, like the appointment of an under-secretary of state, " quite intolerable." Nevertheless, when he had a long interview with the Queen after tendering his resignation, he noted in his diary: " The Queen was most gracious, and I thought most reasonable " (18th June 1885). She offered him an earldom, which he declined.

Lord Salisbury became Prime Minister without a general election and without a stable majority. He would have preferred that Mr Gladstone should at this time continue in office, and there had been much discussion on this subject between the Queen, himself, and Gladstone. The crisis endured for nearly a week before Lord Salisbury consented to be Prime Minister.[1] Lord Morley, who learned all about this from Gladstone, writes: " In reviewing this interesting episode, it is impossible not to observe the dignity in form, the patriotism in substance, the common sense in result, that marked the proceedings alike of the sovereign and her two ministers." Lord Salisbury, however, could only carry on the Government until February 1886, when, to the Queen's consternation (for she knew that Mr Gladstone meant to introduce an Irish Home Rule Bill), he resigned.

The session of 1886 is notable for ever in British history by reason of the introduction of the First Home Rule Bill and the great contest that took place over this in the House of Commons and House of Lords. Among Liberals who felt that they could not go with Mr Gladstone on this question, was Lord Hartington, later Duke of Devonshire, and leader of the secessionist Liberals, to be called the Liberal Unionist Party. After one of Lord Hartington's speeches in the House of Commons against the Home Rule Bill, the Queen wrote to him: " As this is no party question, but one which concerns the safety, honour, and welfare of her dominions, the Queen wishes to express personally to Lord Hartington, not only her admiration of his speech on Friday night, but also to thank

[1] Morley, *Life of Gladstone* (ed. 1904), iii. p. 208.

him for it." She ended the letter by expressing confidence that her Government's Bill (which she called " these dangerous and ill-judged measures for unhappy Ireland ") would be defeated. Mr Gladstone was stung into writing, in one of his official letters to the Queen (not, it is true, in connection with the Irish Question, but the reform of the House of Lords): " Your Majesty's argument might doubtless have been used with great force from the Opposition Bench." [1]

On 7th June 1886, the second reading of the Home Rule Bill in the House of Commons was lost by 343 to 313 votes, 93 Liberals, led by Lord Hartington and Joseph Chamberlain, voting with the Opposition. The Prime Minister—" the unflagging veteran," as his friend Morley called him—had never shown to better advantage than in this debate. " Think, I beseech you," he had said in the closing speech in the House, " think well, think wisely, think, not for the moment, but for the years that are to come, before you reject this bill." When the tellers announced the numbers and he knew that his great plan to solve England's trouble was defeated, he went out quietly with Morley to his private room in the House. Morley wrote: " He seemed for the first time to bend under the crushing weight of the burden that he had taken up."

A general election was held, and was a complete defeat for the Prime Minister and Liberal Party. Mr Gladstone tendered his resignation. The Queen received him (30th July 1886) kindly. " She was in good spirits," he noted in a memorandum; " her manners altogether pleasant. She made me sit at once. Asked after my wife as we began, and sent a kind message to her as we ended." [2] The conversation scarcely touched upon politics. " It is all rather melancholy," he concluded, " but on neither side, given the conditions, could it be well helped."

Lord Salisbury now entered upon a Prime Ministry which went on for six years. He set out to solve the Irish Question simply by good administration. When his nephew A. J. Balfour became Chief Secretary for Ireland, in March 1887, the policy began to show results. Order was firmly kept and a new Land Purchase Bill was carried into law. The Queen's Jubilee of 1887 was held amid great enthusiasm. Cecil Rhodes founded the Chartered Company and colonised Rhodesia (1890). Excellent relations were maintained with Germany with which, in 1890, Heligoland (British since 1814) was exchanged for the protectorate of Zanzibar. There was no trouble of any kind between the sovereign and the Prime Minister. Lord Salisbury, always immersed in official business and never much inclined to society, was never a friend to the Queen like Lord Beaconsfield, but, as a tranquil, conservative aristocrat, he was congenial to the Queen, and his policy, always moderate yet firm, never failed to have her approval. The General Election of 1892, however, gave the Liberals and Irish Home Rulers a majority over the Conservatives and Liberal Unionists. Lord Salisbury resigned.

[1] P. Guedalla, *The Queen and Mr Gladstone* (1933), ii. p. 398.
[2] Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, iii. p. 349.

Mr Gladstone, who still led the great Liberal Party, was, provided that he was ready to be Prime Minister, the only possible choice for the Queen, although she believed him to be a danger all round; she privately expressed her forebodings at having to entrust the great interests of the country, Europe, the Empire, "to the shaking hand of an old, wild, and incomprehensible man of eighty-two and a half."

Mr Gladstone's fourth Prime Ministry lasted for one year and seven months (August 1892–March 1894), long enough for him to carry a second Home Rule Bill through the House of Commons and to see it rejected in the House of Lords. He did not at once resign (the Lords rejected the Bill on 8th September 1893), but remained, incomprehensibly, in office and, indeed, in spite of bodily weakness, cheerfully, until March 1894. Before retiring he made a slashing attack on the House of Lords—the last speech of this greatest of parliamentarians in the House of Commons. This was on 1st March 1894. Next day he packed up his papers and translated some Horace. On 3rd March he wrote a letter to the Queen, tendering his resignation because he felt that the condition of his sight and hearing placed "serious and growing obstacles" in the way of the efficient discharge of his duties. The Queen, who was at Windsor, sent a brief note acknowledging the letter. The note concluded: "She trusts he (Mr Gladstone) will be able to enjoy peace and quiet with his excellent and devoted wife in health and happiness, and that his eyesight may improve." There was no farewell audience. In 1897, however, when Mr Gladstone was staying at Cannes and the Queen at Cimiez, she invited him and Mrs Gladstone to tea at her hotel. They found a room, Gladstone noted, "populated by a copious supply of Hanoverian royalties." He was well received. He noted in his diary: "The Queen's manner did not show the old and usual vitality. It was still, but at the same time very decidedly, kind, such as I had not seen it for a good while before my final resignation. She gave me her hand, a thing which is, I apprehended, rather rare with men, and which had never happened with me during all my life."

When Mr Gladstone retired from politics in 1894, Lord Rosebery, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, became Prime Minister. Fortune's favourite, wealthy, cultured, agreeable, a writer of beautiful English prose, one of the finest orators of the age, a successful owner of race horses, a successful Foreign Secretary, a friend of the Queen and all the Royal Family, Lord Rosebery seemed destined to add distinction to the roll of the Queen's Prime Ministers. Actually, his fifteen months as Prime Minister was just one continuous disappointment. A friend of the Queen, he was compelled by his political views and party loyalties to take up a question which she abhorred, the reform or limitation of the powers of the House of Lords. He suffered, moreover, from the coldness (he felt that it amounted to downright active disloyalty) on the

part of one of his colleagues. The Queen, who had not consulted the outgoing Prime Minister, Mr Gladstone, had chosen Lord Rosebery in preference to Sir William Harcourt. Sir William, deeply mortified by this, and bearing ill-will, not against the Queen but against Lord Rosebery, accepted the position of Home Secretary in the Government but never ceased (Lord Rosebery felt) to make difficulties for his chief. Between the reproaches of the Queen and the unceasing hostility of Sir William Harcourt, Lord Rosebery once so happy, debonair, successful, was losing health, influence, and public usefulness. He was glad to seize the opportunity of an adverse vote, over a question about the supply of cordite, to retire from office in 1895. Lord Salisbury formed a Conservative Government. The Queen now had a Prime Minister thoroughly congenial not only in character, for Lord Rosebery was that, but also in policy. She was now seventy-six years old, and could scarcely be expected any longer to be active in political affairs. As a matter of fact, she bore without serious signs of fatigue the triumphant celebrations of the Diamond Jubilee of 1897. When the war in South Africa came, in 1899, with its early disappointments and disasters, she faced the situation with unflinching courage and will, labouring, as Mr Lytton Strachey has written, " with redoubled vigour," inquiring into the details of hostilities and " sought by every means in her power to render service to the national cause." In April 1900 she made the heroic decision, in her eighty-first year, to give up her annual visit to the south of France and to go to Ireland. " She stayed for three weeks in Dublin, driving through the streets, in spite of the warnings of her advisers, without an armed escort." [1]

In these last years of her reign the Queen had a reputation, a position in the country, unequalled by any previous British monarch. She personified an age—not the Early Victorian Age, but the later one—of assured progress, social contentment. She personified too, the British Empire, free, orderly, open-armed ; for if trade was not absolutely free (it was so in Great Britain), the ports were wide open to immigration, British or foreign, throughout the Empire. Her prestige was personal, not due to her great position, the outstanding success of her long, historic reign (though all this helped); it was due, as well to her qualities—her dignity, industry, clear-sightedness, courage. It was a glorious sunset.

The end was described by Dr Davidson, Bishop of Winchester (later Archbishop of Canterbury) who had been a friend of the Queen for twenty years. Davidson was staying at Fulham, the house of the Bishop of London, Dr Mandell Creighton, who had died about a fortnight before this. On Saturday, 19th January (1901), a telegram from Osborne was handed in at Fulham informing him that the Queen's condition was now serious and that her family had been summoned. Dr Davidson at once cancelled his engagements and caught

[1] L. Strachey, *Queen Victoria* (1924), p. 266.

an afternoon train from Waterloo and the boat to Cowes. He was given a room in Osborne House where the Queen was. His memorandum discloses what followed:

> On Monday, 21st January, between 7 and 8 a.m., I went down and found the house quiet and the report unofficially current that the Queen had decidedly rallied. . . . During the morning she brightened up and said to Sir James Reid: "Am I better at all?" He said "Yes," and then she eagerly answered: "Then may I have Turi?" (her little Pomeranian dog). Turi was sent for and she eagerly held him on the bed for about an hour (Turi now belongs to the Duchess of Albany). Throughout the day I did not go to the Queen's room at all. I saw most of the members of the family, either together or separately, and they all talked quietly over the position of matters. It was arranged that I should stay at Kent House (just outside the Queen's Lodge), lent at present to Sir Fleetwood and Lady Edwardes. Princess Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein was also there. She and I had a great deal of conversation in the afternoon. She had just returned to Osborne after a few days' absence except for which she had been with the Queen for many weeks. . . . The Queen had talked to Princess Tora pretty often lately about illness and even death, which was not according to her wont. . . . Just after dinner at Osborne I went to the three doctors (Reid, Powell, and Barlow) who were sitting together in the Stockmar Room I had so often occupied. . . . After seeing them I had a long talk with the German Emperor and the Duke of Connaught together. They were both so keen to know what judgment we all formed about the probabilities! I pointed out that our judgment was surely of no consequence, but I told them with reserve what the doctors had said. . . . The Duke of Connaught spoke warmly of the good of my being here with them all, and tried, not very successfully, to describe to the Emperor the accumulated offices I hold as Bishop and otherwise. I returned late to Kent House to sleep and wrote another long letter home.
>
> On Tuesday, 22nd, soon after 8 a.m. I was summoned from Kent House, a carriage being sent to bring me as quickly as possible to Osborne. I went straight to the Queen's room. The family were assembled . . . I paid one other visit to the room during the morning, but for some hours Clement Smith and I waited in the Drawing-Room downstairs while the Queen slept. . . . She lay very quietly looking white and thin.
>
> While we were at luncheon about 2.15 I was summoned to go at once and Clement Smith came also. We found her much weaker and the family again assembled . . . we remained in the room a long time, Clement Smith and I saying prayers and hymns at intervals.[1] She was not obviously responsive to the words said, but certain things and specially the last verse of "Lead, kindly Light" seemed at once to catch her attention, and she showed that she followed it. About 3 o'clock the room was again cleared and from 3 to 5 there were intervals of quiet. . . . Twice I was asked to come in for a few minutes. I remained in the Dressing-Room and in the adjoining Drawing-Room. There I had a good deal of talk with the Emperor, who was full of touching loyalty to "Grandmamma" as he always described her. "She has been a very great woman. Just think of it. She remembers George III. and now we are in the twentieth

[1] The Rev. Clement Smith (1845–1921) was a Canon of Windsor.

century. And all that time what a life she has led. I have never been with her without feeling that she was in every sense my Grandmamma and made me love her as such. And yet the minute we began to talk about political things, she made me feel we were equals and could speak as Sovereigns. Nobody had such powers as she." I spoke of the good his coming to England would do. He said repeatedly: "My proper place now is here; I could not be away." At 6 o'clock we were told that the end was certainly approaching. . . . The family wished to see her alone one by one. . . . Then came the great change of look and complete calmness. I had been mainly in the Dressing-Room. At 6.25 Powell summoned me to come in. I said the Commendatory Prayer and one or two texts, and ended with the Aaronic blessing at the very moment that she quietly drew her last breath, the whole family being present in the room. This was just after 6.30. . . .

We left the family alone for a few minutes. Then the King came out alone. I was in the passage and was the first to greet him as Sovereign. I then went to the Equerries' Room where Clarendon (Lord Chamberlain), Arthur Balfour, Sir Arthur Bigge and (I think) Edwardes were present and told them that the end had come.[1]

[1] Bell, *Life of Davidson* (1935), i. p. 352–54. The extract is printed here by kind permission of the Oxford University Press.

CHAPTER VII

THE PRINCE

THE KING, WHO "came out alone" from the death-bed room at Osborne, described in Dr Davidson's memorandum, was a mature prince of fifty-nine years of age. Queen Victoria has often been criticised for not having given him more to do. She could not, of course, be expected to abdicate or even to make him a colleague on the throne. It is true that there was a precedent in German history with regard to the Empress Maria Theresa and her son Joseph II. who became her colleague and co-emperor in 1765 (when he was twenty-four) until her death in 1780; thereafter Joseph II. reigned alone until 1790. In English history there were two precedents of colleagues on the throne, namely, Philip and Mary Tudor, 1554–58, and William III. and Mary Stuart, 1688–94: "a dual monarchy" of this kind was not inconceivable in the United Kingdom, for the Prime Minister tenders advice which is always accepted by the Crown, and therefore, though there might be two Kings (or a Queen and King) there could only be one policy. Nevertheless the possibility of the Prince of Wales becoming colleague on the throne with Queen Victoria seems never to have been considered either by Government or people. The Prince, accordingly, had no advisory functions to perform officially with the ministers, though the Cabinet papers were circulated to him (but not until 1892) as well as to the Queen, and he had increasingly to do ceremonial duty as the reign went on. He was eminently social, a great traveller, and also maintained an active correspondence (though he was not a copious and long letter-writer like Queen Victoria), and thus he acquired a suitable knowledge and experience in foreign affairs. In fact it is doubtful whether any prince was ever better equipped on the "foreign affairs" side of a king's business; and he knew the internal conditions of the country and people well too, through work on Government commissions and through his sociable and approachable personality.

Prince Albert Edward was born on 9th November 1841, at Buckingham Palace, in the second Prime Ministry of Sir Robert Peel. The christening took place at Windsor Castle, one of the godfathers being King Frederick William IV. of Prussia, who came to Windsor for the ceremony. The Prince may be said to have grown up in an atmosphere of great monarchs, for the Tsar Nicholas I. paid a visit to Queen Victoria in 1844 and King Louis Philippe in 1845. In spite of occasional—not frequent—wars between their respective countries,

the monarchs of Europe were in fact a kind of family who visited each other, corresponded with each other, and even recognised some common responsibility for the peace of the world.

Buckingham Palace, Windsor, and Osborne House, near Cowes (which the Queen acquired in 1845) were the chief places of the Prince's boyhood. From earliest times he is said to have been extremely sociable. Like Queen Victoria, he was very fond of dancing. Yachting and yacht-racing round the Isle of Wight was also one of his early and lifelong activities. In 1848 the Queen rented (and later bought) Balmoral House near Braemar, so from this year the Prince made, with the rest of the Royal Family, regular and long visits to the Highlands of Scotland. In 1849 the Queen and the Prince Consort took the eight-year-old Prince of Wales on his first visit to Ireland—Dublin, Cork, Belfast, visited by yacht. He was created Earl of Dublin. From this time he was a fairly frequent visitor to Ireland; unlike Queen Victoria, he had no objection to the rough sea voyage.

The Prince of Wales was very carefully educated, according to an elaborate scheme drafted by the Prince Consort and Baron Stockmar, the confidential friend of the family. He had excellent tutors—the Reverend Henry Birch, an Eton master; Frederick Waymouth Gibbs, a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge; Charles F. Tarver, a Fellow of King's College, Cambridge. These three were classical tutors; but the Prince also learned science from Faraday at the Royal Institution. While he was at Windsor a few selected Eton boys were invited to come over and see him. The Prince Consort was always present, yet in spite of this somewhat restrictive influence, the boys seem to have enjoyed themselves, and the Prince formed enduring friendships with some of them, such as W. H. Gladstone, Charles Carrington (later Marquis of Lincoln), Frederick Stanley (later Earl of Derby), and C. L. Wood (later Lord Halifax). The Prince Consort took little interest in outdoor games, and the curriculum of education which he drafted for the Prince of Wales made little or no provision for them, but the young Prince became a good rider, and engaged in grouse-shooting and deer-stalking, but never became a good shot as did his son and successor, George V. There was nothing military about the education of the Prince of Wales; he had the studies, rather more stiffly organised, of a young English gentleman who was not allowed to go to school. Though not military, he took all through life a great interest in uniforms, for he was extremely neat and orderly and had a keen eye for dress. In 1855, at the age of fourteen, the Prince of Wales made his first visit to the Continent, and so began the series of travels which became a great feature of his career. This first visit, made during the Crimean War, was to Paris, where the Queen, Prince Consort, Prince of Wales, and his elder sister Victoria (later Empress Frederick of Germany), were entertained by Great Britain's ally, the Emperor Napoleon III. The

Prince of Wales wore the Highland kilt throughout this visit, and captivated the whole populace of Paris. A happy association was begun and continued through the next fifty years. Then followed two walking tours, in Dorset and the Lake District, and a journey up the Rhine (meeting the aged statesman, in retirement, Prince Metternich at Johannisberg), and into Switzerland, in company with his tutors and Eton friends. Gladstone was in this party (1857). In 1858 the Prince's elder sister Victoria married Prince Frederick of Prussia (son of the Crown Prince). Thereafter visits to Berlin and Potsdam were naturally frequent. In 1859, at the age of seventeen, the Prince with his tutors spent a month in Rome. He stayed at the famous Hotel d'Angleterre, worked hard (or at any rate very regularly) at the Italian language and other studies, met Pius IX., King Frederick William IV. of Prussia (who had given over his duties in Berlin to a regent), Queen Christina, ex-regent of Spain, the Duc de Gramont, and other notabilities. Going home by sea, he visited Spain. In this year (1859) occurred the War of Italian Unity when, with the aid of the Emperor Napoleon III. and a French army, King Victor Emmanuel of Sardinia achieved union with Lombardy, the Central Italian duchies, and the northern part of the Papal states.

The Prince's travelling was not holiday, but it was less crowded with study than the next periods, beginning with three months at Edinburgh in the summer of 1859. Here the Prince stayed at Holyroodhouse and received instruction in chemistry from Professor Lyon Playfair of the University and in Greek and Roman history from Dr Leonard Schmitz, rector (that is headmaster) of the High School. He also continued his studies in French, German, and Italian. The educational pressure was severe, especially for a youth who was not naturally studious, though he submitted to it loyally. At Michaelmas he went into residence at Oxford University, as an undergraduate of Christ Church. He did not live in college, however, but with his private tutors in Frewin Hall, a pleasant, quiet house, situated between Cornmarket Street and St Michael's Street, later the house of the distinguished historian, Charles Oman.

The Prince spent a complete academic year (1859–60) at Oxford attending private lecture courses with select undergraduates, and receiving private tuition in history from Goldwin Smith, in religious and biblical subjects from Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, in law from Herbert Fisher. He played tennis and rackets, but was allowed only a little hunting. Being not yet eighteen when he went into residence, he was not given permission by his father to smoke, although it appears that he did begin to form a life-long habit of cigar-smoking at this time. His teaching and courses of reading were carefully organised, and the Prince Consort wrote: "The only use of Oxford is that it is a place for *study*." His tutors, however, found that the Prince of Wales, though intelligent and possessing a good memory, was not very fond of steady reading. After the long vacation

of 1860 he did not return to Oxford, but went on a remarkable tour to Canada and the United States. His grandfather, the Duke of Kent, had served in garrison in Canada and had visited the United States. No other member of the Royal Family had done so.

The Prince, attended by a considerable suite (including the Duke of Newcastle, Secretary of State for the Colonies, who wrote the Prince's speeches), crossed the Atlantic in a battleship from Southampton to St John's, Newfoundland, in July 1860. The passage took fourteen days. In Canada he was present at the completion of the railway bridge across the St Lawrence at Montreal, and opened the new Parliament buildings at Ottawa. On 20th September he crossed into the United States at Detroit. He then travelled by Chicago, St Louis (where he attended the annual fair), Harrisburg, Baltimore to Washington. At Harrisburg he was invited by the Governor of Pennsylvania to sit in the chair in which John Hancock had signed the Declaration of Independence in 1776. The Prince, like all Englishmen who regard their history (in so far as they are acquainted with it) tranquilly, made no difficulty over John Hancock's chair. At Washington, where he stayed three days as the guest of President Buchanan at the White House, he took an interest in American institutions and politics. He went down the Potomac River with the President to Mount Vernon, visited George Washington's mansion and grave, and planted a chestnut tree by the grave. From Washington he went south to Richmond, soon to be the centre of the terrible Civil War. The return journey was made by New York, where there was a review of troops and a grand ball, to Boston, where he met Longfellow and Oliver Wendell Holmes. The last visit was made to the battlefield of Bunker's Hill, another monument of England's lost war and lost colonies. Everywhere the Prince was received with the utmost cordiality, and he showed himself, as he remained through life, approachable, friendly, and humorous. Socially and politically, the tour was regarded as a grand success. He arrived back in England on 15th November (1860). He then returned to Oxford for the rest of the Michaelmas term, and in January 1861 migrated to Cambridge. There he became a member of Trinity College. He lived in Madingley Hall, a house four miles out of the town, and rode in for instruction from various tutors, among others Charles Kingsley, who was Regius Professor of History. After the long vacation of 1861 he returned to Cambridge for one more term. The Prince Consort died after a brief illness on 7th December. This tragic event necessarily ended what had been a rather rigorous and (owing to its privacy) rather dull system of education to which the Prince had submitted dutifully, if not with enthusiasm or with exceptional profit. With his teachers he had always been on good terms, and he remained in friendly association with nearly all of them as long as they lived.

After the death of the Prince Consort it was expected that the Prince of

Wales would become something of a collaborator with the Queen in public affairs, but Her Majesty decided otherwise. She felt bound by piety and loyalty to her late husband to transact all state business herself and to continue for the Prince of Wales the kind of life which the Prince Consort had planned for him. So in 1862 the Prince of Wales travelled through Germany, Austria, Egypt, and visited Constantinople.

On 10th March 1863 the Prince of Wales was married in St George's Chapel, Windsor, to Princess Alexandra of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Glücksburg, whose father, Prince Christian, succeeded in the following November to the throne of Denmark. The bride and bridegroom resided at Marlborough House, Pall Mall, and at Sandringham, an estate in Norfolk with good shooting, recently purchased by the Prince. The British people take an enormous interest in marriages of the Royal Family. The beautiful young Princess Alexandra caused the liveliest enthusiasm.

Sidney Lee's biography of King Edward VII., chapter 12, gives a remarkable account of the social activities of the Prince and Princess of Wales at Marlborough House, Sandringham, and Abergeldie Castle. Queen Victoria's social circle might have been compared to that of the Habsburgs ; it was strictly aristocratic, severely formal, carefully regulated. Prince Edward, in spite of his secluded and rather " priggish " education, was naturally a man of the world, genial, companionable, inquisitive, active, and fundamentally interested in people and in life. His beautiful young wife made Marlborough House a social centre all the more brilliant by contrast, which no one could help noticing, with the quietness and sadness that pervaded the Queen's quarters at Windsor and Osborne. The Prince of Wales, entirely free from class consciousness, easily made friends with people far beyond the solemn and aristocratic circle in which he was brought up : great business men, Jews, sportsmen of all kinds, particularly racing men, were added to the people among whom a Prince could move.

He easily became an arbiter of fashion. He dressed well, with distinction. His frank enjoyment of turf racing made him a familiar and popular figure with the vast crowds that went to England's great gathering at Epsom or other " national " races. He enjoyed London club life, and though this was scarcely democratic, like racing, it gave him a far wider circle (and a characteristically English one) than merely court society could furnish. With some friends he founded in 1869 the Marlborough Club in a house opposite to his own. A traveller and genuine man of the world himself, he frequently went to the Cosmopolitan Club (now unfortunately extinct) where famous men of all walks of life and from all countries forgathered, dined, talked. Not only from all parts of the British Empire, but from every quarter of the world, notable men, men of interest, achievement, ideas, activity, came sooner or later to London ; and the gatherings twice a week of the Cosmopolitan Club in the " sixties and seventies " brought

them together. Only in the Cosmos Club in Washington can anything like this probably be seen now.

The Prince's functions, however, were by no means purely social. He was extremely active in many directions, of a practical and administrative kind, though not political. Such was his work as one of the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851, a permanent body which has continued to function for the encouragement of science and industry down to the present day. From 1862 he was a member and from 1863 President of the Society of Arts, which was extremely active in promoting a scientific investigation of industry and commerce. He was one of the founders of the Royal College of Music in 1883. These are only the more striking instances of an incessant round of public and semi-public duties which have established a tradition of what may be called hard-working, popular royalty. This tradition adapted British royalty to the exigencies of a modern world in which, judging by the development of other countries, royalty of the old style was rapidly going out of date.

The pertinacity with which Queen Victoria resisted all efforts to give serious governmental employment to the Prince seems now almost unaccountable. The Prince was most keenly interested in politics, not in the party sense of politics (though he had something of a Whig tradition and outlook) but in the general sense of the country's political affairs. The interesting personalities of politics, the great political game, as well as its serious responsibilities, could not be otherwise than attractive to his busy, inquiring, humane personality. He regularly listened to the debates in Parliament in both Houses. He took an enormous interest in appointments and promotions of men in the naval and military service; in administration and government, and in the orders of knighthood and nobility. His frequent recommendations were naturally received with respect by the ministers of State and other authorities, but were by no means always accepted; nor did he ever seem to feel any pique at the rejection of his recommendations, and never showed any tendency to stop making them. He was on very friendly terms with all Prime Ministers and most Cabinet Ministers. Like Queen Victoria, he was attracted by Disraeli; but, unlike the Queen, he was also personally friendly with Mr Gladstone, and did what he could to counteract her unfortunate coldness towards this statesman. Disraeli and Gladstone, the two great political opponents, whose tremendous and incessant contest in the House of Commons and in political "campaigns" riveted the attention of the people, could meet at the Prince's dinner-table at Marlborough House and engage in social intercourse.

The Prince, however, was too energetic and desirous of public work to remain content with being just on the fringe of the great sphere of politics. His frequent requests to be given some office which a Prince could fill without involving himself in party politics were refused by the Queen. He would

have liked to be attached to the Foreign Office. He would have accepted the post of Viceroy of Ireland, and would probably have completely changed for the better the relations of Great Britain and that country. The Queen refused even to let him have a permanent royal residence there. The most that he could obtain was, from 1886, to be allowed to see the Foreign Office papers which were sent to the Queen; and from 1892, transcripts of the reports about Cabinet meetings which the Prime Minister regularly sent to the Sovereign. The Queen insisted, however, that the Prince must not keep the transcripts; they had to be returned to the Prime Minister's private secretary. When the Queen left the country, as she did for about a month each year (going to the Riviera), the Prince represented her in presiding over the Privy Council. But no occasion arose for a meeting of the Privy Council to be held in the Queen's absence until 1898, when the Prince was fifty-seven.[1] He presided at the meeting which issued the proclamation of neutrality in regard to the Spanish-American War. The Prince's interest in Ireland never waned; he obtained the consent of the Queen to visit Ireland four times; the most important occasion was in 1885, the year before the introduction of the First Home Rule Bill in the British Parliament. In spite of Irish Nationalist agitation, the personality of the Prince and Princess evoked spontaneous warmth among the Irish. To the end of the reign of Queen Victoria the Prince tried to have a secure, more continuous "connection with Ireland," but was unable to gain permission. Personally, he objected to Mr Gladstone's Home Rule Bill, and was unwilling to visit the country while agitation for the Bill was going on between 1886 and 1895. Queen Victoria herself, however, despite extreme old age and intense dislike of the sea-crossing, paid the State visit, already mentioned, to Dublin in 1900.

In foreign affairs the Prince gained, by observation rather than by study, a unique knowledge. After the death of the Prince Consort, he was heir to the Duchy of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, for Duke Ernst, the Prince Consort's elder brother, was childless. The heir to the thrones of the United Kingdom and of Coburg was bound to be a European personality. It is true that in 1863 the Prince of Wales renounced his rights to Coburg in favour of his brother, Prince Alfred, later Duke of Edinburgh, who succeeded to the throne of Coburg in 1893. Prince Edward, however, after the death of the reigning Duke Ernst in 1893, was the Head of the House, so many of whose princes sat upon thrones: Belgium, Bulgaria, Portugal, Great Britain, and Coburg. His uncle, Ernst Augustus, was King of Hanover until 1851; after this, his cousin, George V., was King until deposed by Prussia in 1866. The Prince of Wales himself would have been King of Hanover but for the Salic Law. His sister-in-law, Princess Dagmar of Denmark married the Tsarevitch, afterwards Alexander III. of

[1] Lee, *King Edward VII.*, i. p. 221.

Russia. His brother-in-law, Prince George of Denmark, became George I. of Greece. The Prince of Wales's father-in-law was King of Denmark. His elder sister was Crown Princess of Germany (in 1888 Empress Frederick). His younger sister, Alice, married Louis, who succeeded to the Grand Ducal throne of Hesse-Darmstadt in 1877. He was closely related to the Royal (mediatised) family of Hohenlöhe (or Gleichen) and of Teck, as well as to the family which unsuccessfully claimed the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, the Dukes of Schleswig-Holstein-Augustenburg. Through his connection with the Russian Royal family (or rather the Princess of Wales' connection, through her sister, Empress Alexander III. of Russia), he was related to the King of Würtemburg and the Grand Duke of Oldenburg.

For a man like the Prince of Wales, so keenly interested in people, in politics, society, always travelling, conversing, observing, this intimate and widespread relationship with the Royal and princely families of Europe ensured a knowledge of foreign affairs and of European personalities such as even the most experienced ambassador could not obtain. Yet if the Prince had only moved in Royal circles his knowledge of people and politics would, though wide, have suffered from the very real limitations of all Royal circles; but it must be remembered that what might be called his social catholicity, his zest for life and society, gave him friends and acquaintances far beyond the Royal circles. They were all, it is needless to say, well-to-do, affluent circles. The Prince of Wales, however humane, could scarcely live the life of the common people either at home or abroad; but no more did the statesmen, however democratic, live the lives of the common people in the nineteenth century. The Prince of Wales probably knew more about Europe and its people and affairs than any other European statesman. It is often questioned whether the interrelationship of the European Royal families contributed to the mutual understanding, the co-operation or forbearance of peoples; but there really should be no doubt that it did so. Royal relationships did not prevent occasional (though rare) warfare between states; but on the whole they contributed to stability, as may easily be judged by anyone who observes the condition of Europe since thrones have disappeared.

The Royal Family naturally had a vivid interest in German affairs, and down to 1861 this interest was strongly favourable to Prussia which, in the Prince Consort's view, was the natural leader of the movement for unity. After the Prince Consort's death in 1861, and after Bismarck became Minister President of Prussia in 1862, the tendency or method of the unity movement was altered. In his first speech as Minister President before the Budget Committee of the Landtag, Bismarck said: " We (the Germans) should get no nearer the goal by speeches, associations, decisions of majorities; we should be unable to avoid a serious contest which could only be settled by blood and iron."

This flat contradiction, defiance, and contempt of the whole "Liberal" trend of the nineteenth-century politics seemed doomed to failure. It was the assertion of force and of state egotism against the principles of international justice, law, order, democracy. But it succeeded. Within eight years the old Germanic Confederation, established by the Treaties of Vienna in 1815 with Austria as presiding state, was destroyed. Germany (without Austria) was united in what was largely a Prussian Empire. This was achieved in three wars: the Schleswig-Holstein War (Prussia and Austria against Denmark, 1864); the Austro-Prussian War, 1866; the Franco-German War, 1870–71. The attitude and feelings of the British Court to all this were complicated by the fact that Queen Victoria's eldest daughter was Crown Princess of Prussia; and the Crown Prince (though a Liberal and a determined critic of Bismarck) was a successful general in the Prussian armies. Besides, the Princess of Wales was a daughter of Christian IX. of Denmark, who was despoiled of his two duchies, Schleswig and Holstein, in 1864; and the Prince of Wales's cousin was King of Hanover, who was despoiled of his kingdom (for fighting on the Austrian side) in 1866. There was less, but perhaps some, political importance in the fact that the Empress Eugénie whose husband, Napoleon III., lost his Empire in 1870 (after the German victory of Sedan) was a personal friend of Queen Victoria.

The Prince of Wales's opinion about the Prussian (or Prussian and Austrian) War against Denmark in 1864 was, in private, quite outspoken. He thought the war detestable; and he held that if the British fleet had been sent to the Baltic it could have prevented this first fatal, successful blow at the public law of Europe. "This horrible war," the Prince wrote to a friend, 17th February 1864, "will be a stain for ever on Prussian history, and I think it is very wrong of our Government not to have interfered."

The Schleswig-Holstein War opened the breach in the structure of "old" Europe; and Prussia was soon (1866) at war with Austria and all the other chief members of the Germanic Confederation. The battle of Sadowa (3rd July 1867) decided the fate of the Confederation which was at once dissolved (having existed since 1815), to give place to a new North German Confederation, without Austria, and with Prussia as presiding state. The kingdom of Hanover and the Electorate of Hesse-Cassel were wiped off the map, annexed to Prussia. The Prince of Wales had hoped that the war either would have been prevented or would have been made less disastrous for Europe in its results by a Franco-British entente of which he was already a warm advocate.

Between the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 and the Franco-German War of 1870 the Prince and Princess of Wales attended, with nearly all the rest of European royalty, the Great Exhibition in Paris of 1867, where the French Empire showed all its brilliance—in society, the arts and crafts—so soon before

it was to go to its doom in the Franco-German War. The Prince and Princess again visited France in 1868. They spent a large part of the year 1868–69 in a great tour through Germany, Egypt (where they were present at the completion of the Suez Canal), Turkey, and the Crimea. Everywhere he went the observant Prince conversed with the people who were directing affairs, and he added to his already extraordinarily wide and discursive knowledge.

In 1870 the third of the great Prussian series of wars occurred. Although provoked, the French Government of the Emperor Napoleon III. forced the outbreak of war by demanding that a guarantee be given against any Hohenzollern Prince *ever* being candidate for the throne of Spain. The news of the rupture with Germany announced by M. Emile Ollivier in the *Corps Législatif*, "*with a light heart* (*le cœur léger*)," was forwarded from *The Times* office to Marlborough House where Delane, the editor, was dining with the Prince of Wales. Delane at once passed on the news to the Prince.

The United Kingdom was neutral in the Franco-German War of 1870–71. The Government, of which Mr Gladstone was Prime Minister, made within a few weeks of the opening of hostilities a treaty with Prussia (8th August 1870) undertaking to join in the war alongside that Power if the French invaded Belgium; and it made an exactly similar treaty for co-operation with France in case the Prussians should invade Belgium (9th August 1870.) As both parties to the war respected Belgian neutrality, the United Kingdom had no call to intervene. The sympathy of Queen Victoria was undoubtedly with the German side, more perhaps because the French had directly caused the war (by their "guarantee" demand about the Spanish crown) than on account of her close relations with the Prussian, Hessian, and other Royal German families. Curiously, she considered the Germans as the weaker party, and was apprehensive of the results of a French victory in the war.[1] The Prince of Wales, whose annual visits to France made that country a second home to him, was undoubtedly sympathetic with the French. As the United Kingdom had a strictly constitutional Government, the private sympathies of the Queen had no effect upon policy, nor, of course, had the Prince's. His passionate desire was not for British intervention in the war (as he *had* desired in the Schleswig-Holstein affair), but for mediation. He besought the Queen, who naturally could only have acted through the Cabinet, to allow him to go on a mission of peace, armed with Royal letters empowering him to make proposals to both sides. Soon after the war started he wrote from Abergeldie to the Queen:

> I cannot bear sitting here and doing nothing, whilst all this bloodshed is going on. How I wish you could send me with letters to the Emperor (of the French) and King

[1] Wemyss, *Memoirs of Sir R. Morier* (1911,) ii. p. 153.

of Prussia, with friendly advice; even if it ultimately failed I would gladly go any distance. . . .

The Prince was not permitted to earn the blessing which is promised to the peacemakers, but his intention should not pass unrecorded. The war went on to its tragic conclusion. The Emperor of the French was captured at Sedan, Paris was besieged for four months until it capitulated. The German Empire was founded and proclaimed at Versailles on 18th January 1871. The defeated French Emperor and his wife found a home in England. Their son, the Prince Imperial, aged fourteen, came with them and was educated in England, latterly at Woolwich Academy with the Royal Engineers and Gunners. He was killed in the Zulu War in 1879. The Prince of Wales himself had a narrow escape from death, not in warfare, but through illness. He was attacked by typhoid fever in November 1871, and for some days his life was practically despaired of. This fact was not withheld from the public. The deep sympathy and interest manifested by all the people is a stage in the history of the Royal family in the nineteenth century. There had been growing up in Great Britain not exactly a republican movement, but at any rate a republican sentiment. Queen Victoria's obstinate retirement since the death of the Prince Consort was unpopular. As the expenses of Royalty did not diminish, there was widespread criticism of the Civil List, and the Queen was covertly accused of saving money out of it. The grave illness of the Prince of Wales in 1871 discovered a source of warm-heartedness and affection in the people, and, so to speak, domesticated Royalty in the country. When he was convalescent, the Prince resumed his travelling habits and his hospitalities at home, entertaining at Marlborough House men of any political party, including, to the surprise of many people, the Radicals Chamberlain, Fawcett, Dilke. In France his friends had hitherto been naturally among the aristocracy—men such as the Duc de Gramont, the diplomatist, and the Marquis de Galliffet, a dashing general of cavalry. In 1878, however, when he was at Paris for the Great Exhibition of that year, he met Gambetta, the great " Tribune " of the people and of the Republic. The two men became friends: one, the Heir Apparent to the British throne, a leader of fashion, a king of sport; the other, the ugly, squat, vociferous public man, the *enfant terrible* of French politics. The Prince of Wales at this time was thirty-six years old. Gambetta was forty, and was every year becoming more and more the responsible statesman; his knowledge of European affairs, his decided and wide views on policy, made him congenial to the Prince. It was a loss for France and for Franco-British relations when Gambetta's career was cut short, the result of a shooting accident, in 1882.

The Prince's relations with Gambetta were particularly helpful towards preventing friction between Great Britain and France over the Eastern Question which concerned Turkey, Egypt, and the route to India. The Suez Canal

had been opened in 1869. The Prince had travelled in Egypt in 1862 and in 1869 (though he was not present at the formal opening of the Canal). In 1875 the Government of Mr Disraeli, in which Lord Salisbury was Secretary of State for India, decided that the Prince should go on an official tour in India. The East India Company had been abolished in 1858. India was now directly under the crown and parliament, though the constitutional position was still a little anomalous; India was vaguely called a "Dependency."

For the journey Parliament authorised the Admiralty to spend £52,000 on transport, and the Treasury to allow £60,000 for the Prince's expenses in India. The Government of India set aside £30,000 for outlays in connection with the visit. Of this sum of £142,000 a considerable portion was for the presents which the Prince would have to give in return for the gifts of Indian princes. In Parliament among the Opposition (but not on the part of Mr Gladstone) there was then, as there had been and continued to be all through Queen Victoria's reign, a great deal of outspoken criticism of the cost of royalty. Only men went on the party to India; in the Prince's numerous suite were the Duke of Sutherland (perhaps his chief friend); his equerry, Colonel Dighton Probyn, V.C.; Lieutenant (afterwards Admiral) Lord Charles Beresford, R.N.; and Sir Bartle Frere, a distinguished Indian civil servant, who took charge of the party throughout the tour. On 8th November 1875, they landed from H.M.S. *Serapis* at Bombay.

The itinerary—which aroused genuine interest and enthusiasm in the districts visited—was Bombay–Poona–Baroda, then by sea to Ceylon, and from there to Madras. New Year's Day was spent in Calcutta. Benares, Lucknow, Delhi, Agra and Jaipur (where the Prince shot his first tiger), Indore, were the next places visited. The departure from India took place at Bombay on 13th March 1876, the Prince and his suite travelling back to England, as they had come out, in H.M.S. *Serapis*. While he was on the sea a bill was going through Parliament to add to the style and titles of the British sovereign that of Empress of India. The importance of this step was obvious, and the Prince, who was gaining so much experience in India when the step was being considered, thought that he might have been consulted, or at least informed of it. Before he arrived back in England he wrote to the Prime Minister, Mr Disraeli (22nd April 1876):

> "As the Queen's eldest son I think I had some right to feel annoyed that the announcement of the addition to the Queen's title should have been read by me in the newspapers."

The proclamation of the crown's assumption of the title of Empress was not made until the following year, at a Durbar, or an Imperial Assembly, held

by the Viceroy, Lord Lytton, at the former capital of the Royal Emperors, Delhi (1st January 1877).

The affairs of the East, both Near and Far, were pressing upon everybody's attention at this time. In 1877–78 there occurred the Russo-Turkish War which aroused enormous interest in Great Britain. The Conservative Party under Mr Disraeli were in power, and Conservative circles were favourable to the Turks. The Liberals, especially after Mr Gladstone had written his pamphlet, *Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East,* were more critical of Turkish rule. The Prince of Wales had personal knowledge of the Near East; and one of his friends, General Valentine Baker, who had left the British army in 1875, commanded a Turkish division. By March 1878 the Turks, in spite of Osman Pasha's defence of Plevna, were beaten. The Porte concluded the Treaty of San Stefano (3rd March 1878), agreeing to the increase of Serbia and Montenegro and to the creation of a "Big Bulgaria" between the Black Sea and the Albanian mountains, the Danube, and the Ægean. This brought Disraeli (created Earl of Beaconsfield) into the open against Russia. He (and the Queen fully shared his views) believed that a "Big Bulgaria" would be simply a Russian Protectorate. The Queen was quite prepared to face war over this question. She was still living in the atmosphere of the Crimean War; Russia, in her eyes was the despotic Tsardom, marching towards Constantinople and India.

The Prince at this time was as anti-Russian as his mother. Fortunately, the Crimean War was not re-enacted, for the Russian Government proved to be conciliatory and consented to take part in a Congress of the Powers for the revision of the Treaty of San Stefano. The Congress of Berlin resulted in the signature of the Treaty of Berlin, 13th July 1878. Bulgaria, to be called a Principality, was restricted to the area between the Danube and the Balkans. The new Principality never afterwards looked like behaving as a "client-state" of Russia.

It is difficult to imagine the position and state of mind of this active young man (he was thirty-six in 1878), not permitted to have any regular occupation, without even any constitutional right to give advice or to be consulted on the politics, especially foreign politics, in which he was so passionately interested, and on which he was so exceptionally well informed. He may almost be said to have had a "grand design," for an *entente cordiale* between Great Britain and France. With Germany the political relations of Great Britain were reasonably good; the numerous ties of kinship between the British and German royal families were a fairly good guarantee of this. The inability of the French and British Governments to be on cordial terms with each other was disturbing to these countries and to all Europe. Had Gambetta lived longer (he died in 1882 at the age of forty-four) the *entente* would probably have been arranged, for Gambetta

against this. He was also warmly in favour of the nomination, which caused considerable questioning, of Cardinal Manning, to the Commission. Twenty years later (1905) when the Prince was King, a Royal Commission on the Poor Law was appointed and Miss Octavia Hill, along with Mrs Bernard Bosanquet, became a member. In 1893, the Prince of Wales accepted an invitation from the Prime Minister, Mr Gladstone, to be a member of the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor. One of the Commissioners later wrote, " He attended very regularly and asked, when his turn came, very good questions." He appears to have been quite active in the investigations of the Commission, but he did not sign the Report on the ground that as its conclusions had become a matter of public controversy, " it has assumed a phase inconsistent with my position of political neutrality." The Prince's genuine interest in social matters was further seen in his work to establish Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee Fund for Hospitals in 1897, subsequently known as King Edward VII.'s Hospital Fund. The collections in aid of this fund and their distribution have saved the " voluntary principle " of hospital management. There can be no doubt of the Prince's serious interests, although he managed to combine with them very active participation in sport—shooting, yachting, and racing. He won the Derby in 1896 with Persimmon and in 1900 with Diamond Jubilee.

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CHAPTER VIII

ALLIANCE AND ENTENTE

WHEN QUEEN VICTORIA died on 22nd January 1901, the Prince was fifty-nine years and two months old. He assumed the title of Edward VII., a style somewhat criticised in Scotland where there had never been an Edward VI. He was, with the exception of William III. probably the most mature and experienced Prince to ascend the English throne; and he found a formidable list of problems for his ministers to deal with.

Most of the problems, as it seemed, concerned external affairs. At the time of King Edward's accession the Anglo-Boer War which began in 1899 was not yet over. Negotiations, with a view to an Anglo-German alliance, which had been going on intermittently for two years, were coming to an unsatisfactory end. The British and French Governments and their peoples had been involved in 1898 in an acute controversy over the possession of a place on the Upper Nile called Fashoda. This matter though settled now (the French abandoning an untenable claim) was not forgotten. The Far East had been disturbed first by a Sino-Japanese War in 1896 and then by a "Boxer" revolt in China, when the Legations in Peking were besieged and were relieved by an international expedition (1900).

The domestic situation, however, had a placid appearance. The old Queen's peaceful death was like a quiet, mellow sunset. People still remember the occasion; the hush that fell upon the land, the absence of criticism of the Queen, the unusual, genuine expressions of regard, all classes united in sympathy at this quite touching end of the long reign of a familiar, historic sovereign. The country had advanced in prosperity, in the arts and crafts, in industry and commerce, in the art of living. The latter half of the Victorian Age was a Golden Age, of peace and plenty and high, if not the highest, intellectual achievement. King Edward VII. might expect a continuance of the halcyon period. As a matter of fact it ended with the nineteenth century; the new century was soon to develop troubles in England, and all over the world.

It was expected that as "a man of the world succeeding a recluse," King Edward would revive the power of the Crown; but this did not happen. "The King exerted not more but less authority than his mother." [1] Queen Victoria, though she kept in the background, was tireless in reading official papers and

[1] R. C. K. Ensor, *England 1870–1914* (published 1936), p. 343.

in corresponding with her ministers. King Edward had never been fond of reading anything except newspapers. And though he had serious interests he had always been used (and his exclusion from public affairs increased the tendency) to spending much of his time in travelling, in sport and in society. He had wide experience and knowledge of foreign affairs and he knew the personnel of the British Government thoroughly, but he had never been given any practice in the technique of constitutional government, and on the verge of sixty years of age he was rather old to learn it. As King he had influence upon Government, but certainly less than Queen Victoria and less than his successor George V. latterly came to have.

The urgent problems of external affairs were successfully solved. The Anglo-Boer War was finished within sixteen months of the King's accession. It would have ended a year earlier if Milner, the High Commissioner in South Africa, would have consented to the amnestying of some three hundred Cape rebels whom the Boers in the field loyally protected. The British Commander-in-Chief in South Africa, Lord Kitchener, wrote to the Secretary of State for War (22nd March 1901): "Milner's views may be strictly just but they are to my mind vindictive. We are now carrying on the war to put some two or three hundred Dutchmen in prison at the end of it. It seems to me absurd and wrong." So the war continued with all its tragedy not only for the fighters in the field, but for the Boer women and children who had to be kept in concentration camps; the loss of lives in these camps was twenty thousand, from disease.[1] The King kept closely in touch with all reports from the seat of war, and expressed useful opinions about military appointments. After peace negotiations were opened he was chagrined to learn about the proposed terms in a letter from the German Emperor. How William II. knew the proposals made by Milner and Kitchener in South Africa before the King or Cabinet learned of them has never been explained. The Peace Treaty of Vereeniging was concluded on 31st May 1902. The Transvaal and Orange Free State had already been declared to be annexed to Great Britain. By the Vereeniging terms all the Boers who were willing to declare themselves loyal subjects of Edward VII. were free to return to their farms and houses; and a grant of £3,000,000 was made by Parliament towards rebuilding and restocking.

While the Anglo-Boer war was ending, the intermittent negotiations between Great Britain and Germany for an alliance were coming to an end too. There is some question who began them: but there is no doubt that from 1898 to 1901 there was quite a strong movement, unofficially, among certain social groups (Ballin, the Rothschilds, the Duchess of Devonshire) and among certain ministers and diplomats (Eckardstein, Chamberlain), for an Anglo-German

[1] Ensor, *op. cit.* p. 347. From January 1901 to February 1902 (inclusive) out of 117,871 people in the concentration camps, 20,177 died

agreement. It was unfortunate for the negotiations that King Edward VII. and William II. were not, on the whole, on good terms. In their frequent meetings they were often friendly with each other, but every now and then something jarred in their relations. After his accession the King suggested to the Kaiser that if there was any divergence between the British and German Governments, the Kaiser should write to him direct, to see if they could "smooth matters down." The impetuous Kaiser, rather surprisingly, accepted the suggestion coldly and within about a month wrote to the King saying that the British Ministers were "unmitigated noodles" (he wrote in English). The King, not unnaturally, complained of this expression to Eckardstein, the *chargé d'affaires* at the German embassy. Besides, the King could not ignore the German Fleet Law of 1898 and 1900 which aimed, obviously, at adding a very strong navy to the Power which already had the strongest army. The King, of course, did not know that the Kaiser was about this time writing (20th August 1901) to the Chancellor Bülow: "The building of our fleet must be expedited as quickly as possible. Who will get a nice surprise are the English, and perhaps it is also aimed at them."[1] Even if this was not meant quite seriously, it shows the dangerous character of the Kaiser. The King could not be blind to the Kaiser's impetuosity and the growth of the German fleet. He went in that month (August 1901) on a visit to the Kaiser at Wilhelmshöhe and engaged in friendly political conversation, but no progress was made. Joseph Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies, was still working for a German alliance.

The King's view, expressed in a letter to Sir Frank Lascelles, British ambassador at Berlin, was that a treaty of alliance could not be made with Germany, but that "a thorough *entente cordiale* with him (the Kaiser) in all subjects which are of importance to both countries" was possible and desirable. This method—the removing by negotiation of outstanding difficulties which existed in various parts of the world between the two Governments or peoples—was later followed in the relations between Great Britain and France. One *entente*, as it does not involve an alliance with fixed conditions, is compatible with another; an *entente* between Great Britain and Germany would not necessarily have excluded one with France. The Kaiser and his advisers preferred an alliance to an *entente*. They would have liked Great Britain to join the Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria, and Italy), or they thought that an additional triple alliance might be made: Germany, Great Britain, the United States. Another plan was for an alliance of Germany, Great Britain, and Japan; or even all four: Germany, Great Britain, the United States and Japan. As a matter of fact the year 1901 was wholly unfavourable to any such projects of Anglo-German alliance. The Boer War was still in progress, and Chamberlain and Bülow had fallen into a bitter and undignified controversy

[1] This letter is cited, textually, in English, in Lee, *King Edward VII.*, ii. p. 126.

about the military methods of the British Army in the Transvaal compared with the methods of the German Army in France in 1870. The controversy, which naturally excited popular feeling both in Great Britain and Germany, came to a head after the ministers had, as it were, exchanged speeches from their respective public platforms, with Chamberlain's speech of 11th January 1902. He said: "What I have said, I have said. I withdraw nothing, I qualify nothing, I defend nothing . . . . I do not want to give lessons to a foreign Minister, and I will not accept any at his hands." After this, the alliance project or the *entente* project between Great Britain and Germany came to an end. King Edward said to Eckardstein after dinner at Marlborough House (where the King was still living until Buckingham Palace should be made ready for him) on 26th February 1902: "As you very well know, both I and the majority of my Ministers would very gladly have gone with Germany in all Colonial and other questions, but it can't be done." Lord Lansdowne, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, had not given up the effort, and was making proposals through Eckardstein to Germany, but at this time no reply was forthcoming. Holstein, the Political Director of the German Foreign Office, who was previously inclined to be pro-English, thought that better terms would be obtained by waiting. He believed, to use his own expression, that the tides were inevitably bringing Great Britain and Germany together, and that Great Britain's need would be greater than Germany's. Some German historians have blamed him for this view and have called his decision, Holstein's Great No (*Holstein's Grosses Nein*). It is obvious, however, that there were some faults also on the British side of the negotiations. On the other hand the German Government's naval policy, and its absolute refusal for the next ten years to consider any agreement with Great Britain for a limitation, made a complete bar to an *entente*.

The Far Eastern Question at this time concerned China, which looked like breaking up. One Great Power after the other was taking a slice of Chinese territory. None could bear to be outdistanced by the other. When, in 1898, the German Government obtained a lease of Kiaochow, the Russian Government had to take Port Arthur, whereupon the British demanded and received Wei-hai-wei. When the Boxer rebels besieged the Peking Legations in 1900, and an international force marched up from Tientsin and relieved them, a vast indemnity was imposed upon China, and the Legations were converted into a great permanent foreign fortress. The events of the Boxer rebellion had led to the entry of Russian troops into Manchuria, and there they stayed; and it looked as if they would soon be in Korea, which was nominally an independent empire. Across the not very wide waters from Korea was the ambitious and increasingly powerful island empire of Japan. King Edward at first was not particularly attracted by the idea of a Japanese alliance; if it came into

existence, he would have liked, as the Kaiser suggested, to have Germany included in it. The Anglo-German negotiations, however, were not proceeding well; and by the beginning of the year 1902 King Edward had given them up as hopeless, even if Lord Lansdowne was more optimistic. So the alliance was concluded, between Great Britain and Japan only, on 30th January 1902. It was based on the principle of the maintenance of the independence and integrity of China along with the "open" commercial door there; and it bound each contracting party to be neutral towards the other if either were involved in war, in China or Korea, with any one Power; and to support each other with arms if either were involved in war with two Powers. The treaty was not kept secret. King Edward insisted that the German Government should be the first to be informed of it. There can be no two opinions about the efficacy of the alliance. It preserved the integrity of China as long as it lasted. The alliance was suppressed in 1922; when the Japanese and Russians went to war in 1904, the Anglo-Japanese alliance (Great Britain being neutral but bound to intervene if another Power assisted Russia) kept the war located in the Far East. If it helped to save Manchuria for the Chinese Government, it also ensured that the Japanese authorities should be content with the territorial *status quo* in the Far East. It relieved any possible British anxiety about Russia's designs upon India, and thus, in a roundabout way, along with the Anglo-French entente, it helped to make possible the entente of Great Britain and Russia in 1907, which Japan informally joined.

The origins of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance are obscure. Who conceived the idea and prepared its reception is not fully known. About the origins of the Anglo-French entente there is a good deal more knowledge. The King had all his life been in favour of an Anglo-French entente. Had Gambetta lived longer he, through his friendship with Prince Edward, might have achieved an entente himself. The failure of the efforts for an Anglo-German alliance and entente in 1901–2 seems to have turned the King's mind now definitely in the direction of making serious efforts at an understanding with France. This is not to say that the design of the entente originated with Edward VII. It is clear from M. Paléologue's memoirs that the French Foreign Minister, Delcassé, independently formed such a design himself, and selected Paul Cambon, of the French diplomatic service, as being particularly suitable to accomplish this at the London Embassy. About the same time, Lord Lansdowne, who had succeeded Lord Salisbury as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in 1900, had made up his mind that the isolation of Great Britain of the late Victorian age must be abandoned in the Edwardian. His failure to establish a diplomatic understanding with Germany made him look more specifically elsewhere—towards Japan or France. Lord Lansdowne was partly of French extraction, had connections in French society, in his youth frequently visited for long

periods his relations in Paris, and spoke French perfectly. These circumstances, chiefly personal, on both sides of the Channel, favoured the promotion of an entente. The chief obstacle was history, past and recent. There was the *damnosa hereditas* of past Anglo-French wars, in the Middle Ages, in the eighteenth century, and in the Age of Napoleon. Recent history, too, had been filled with intermittent irritation and exasperation over troublesome, though petty, matters like Fashoda, Parisian cartoons during the Boer War. the rights of French fishermen off Newfoundland. It is a remarkable fact, however, that a "secular" misunderstanding, so fondly cherished by Chauvinist journalists and writers of history text-books, can quite suddenly become "understanding" if a powerful and respected Government decides that understanding is in the national interest. For five hundred years Prussians and Poles had been teaching themselves to regard their division from each other as irreconcilable until Hitler and Pilsudski decided that the contrary view should be taken. Accordingly the Polish-German Treaty of 26th January 1934 was made, and the two peoples suddenly found that they could collaborate. So it was with the British and French peoples. When their Governments decided that co-operation was desirable and essential (probably because of their mutual anxiety about German militarism and navalism), the tone of public and private speech and writing immediately changed. The two peoples discovered how much they had in common. All this happened in two countries where the Press was absolutely free and could say what it liked.

Great Britain has a strictly constitutional monarchy. The design for an Anglo-French entente was the affair of the Cabinet, and particularly of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. King Edward's contribution was to give whatever assistance he could on the advice of his ministers. The European tour, however, which he undertook in 1903, was his own conception; "details were communicated to his ministers only after his general plan had been formed." [1]

The monarch, naturally, has the right to suggest, as well as to give advice when asked for it by the responsible ministers whose advice he takes. As the tour now proposed by the King was to be official, not private, it required ministerial approval; and, according to the custom of the constitution, the King would have to be accompanied by a responsible official. On this occasion the arrangement adopted was that a member of the diplomatic service, not a cabinet minister, should accompany and attend the King. The official chosen, Charles Hardinge, who was later Viceroy of India, and twice permanent Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office, was at this time forty-five years old, and was Secretary of Embassy at St Petersburg.

The historic tour of 1903 was made in the Royal Yacht to Lisbon, Gibraltar.

[1] S. Lee, *op. cit.* ii. p. 221.

and Naples; and thence by train to Rome and onward to Paris. At Rome the King visited the King Victor Emmanuel III. of Italy and also Pope Leo XIII., who was ninety-three, and died in the same year. At Paris, where he arrived on 1st May (1903), the King was greeted in public with obvious coolness. There is said to have been some booing in the streets (it must be remembered that Fashoda and the Boer War were still lively popular memories in Paris). Someone in the King's suite remarked: "The French don't like us." The King's characteristic reply was: "Why should they?" [1] By the time, however, that the King left Paris (4th May) the social atmosphere had completely altered. Making and receiving visits, entertaining old friends and new, delivering his graceful, spontaneous speeches, the King impressed Paris and the French Government with the idea of Anglo-French friendship. That the effect of the King's visit is not merely legendary, but actually and powerfully helped to produce the *Entente Cordiale*, is evidenced by the report of a Belgian diplomatist despatched at the time to the Foreign Office at Brussels. He wrote (13th May 1903): "Seldom has such a complete change of attitude been seen as that which has taken place in this country during the last fortnight towards England and her sovereign." Count Metternich, German Ambassador at London, who was a very well-informed and able man, reported to the Foreign Office at Berlin: "The visit of King Edward to Paris has been a most odd affair, and, as I know for certain, was the result of his own initiative." Metternich pointed out that there was no reason to regard this as a step adverse to Germany. "I am convinced that the English Government in the approaching reconciliation with France desires to create no opposition to Germany. Reconciliation with an enemy does not imply quarrelling with a third party." This wise German diplomatist was right. The idea of an *entente* between Great Britain and France did not exclude the idea of an *entente* between Great Britain and Germany, though unfortunately such an *entente* was not achieved. The return visit of President Loubet, who was accompanied by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Delcassé, took place in July 1903.

After King Edward came back from Paris, the Foreign Office entered into the long and arduous negotiations which resulted in the Franco-British Agreements of 8th April 1904. There was no treaty of alliance, which is a relatively simple affair to draft and conclude, provided that the contracting parties are willing. The negotiation of 1903–4 was something far more complicated than this. It meant that the British Foreign Office and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs had to investigate every point at which British and French interests seemed to conflict in Egypt, Morocco, West Africa, Indo-China, Newfoundland. Having detected all the contentious points, the two Foreign Offices had then patiently to frame reasonable and mutually satisfactory conventions

[1] Lee, *op. cit.* ii. p. 237.

for eliminating friction in respect of every one of those areas. These conventions had to be such as seemed reasonable not only to the diplomatists, but to the politicians and the public. At last the long series of transactions was completed, and the Franco-British Conventions were signed, 8th April 1904. The points of friction having been thus eliminated, the two neighbouring peoples naturally entered into a normal and friendly relation with each other. King Edward was not originator and maker of the *entente*, nor did he ever claim to be so, but he was one of the makers.

CHAPTER IX

THE KING'S PRIME MINISTERS AND THE DOMESTIC POLICY

QUEEN VICTORIA'S SIXTY-FOUR years' reign was famous for its long roll of eminent Prime Ministers, some ten in all (Melbourne, Peel, Russell, Aberdeen, Palmerston, Derby, Disraeli, Gladstone, Rosebery, Salisbury). King Edward, who reigned for less than a decade, had four—Salisbury, Balfour, Campbell-Bannerman, Asquith. Lord Salisbury, however, is scarcely to be regarded as an "Edwardian" Prime Minister. He was eminently typically Victorian, solid, sensible, aristocratic, able. He was the last of the great Victorians. Being in office when the King came to the throne on 22nd January 1901, he remained as Prime Minister to see the South African War ended and the King crowned. Peace was not secured in South Africa for over a year (Treaty of Vereeniging, 21st May 1902), and the coronation fixed for June 1902 had to be postponed until 9th August on account of a severe illness of the King. Lord Salisbury, who was now seventy-two years old, resigned office on 11th July 1902. He had been three times Prime Minister in all, thirteen and a half years, a year longer than Mr Gladstone's four Prime Ministries. It is said that the occasion of his resignation was a request from the King that a certain name should be inserted in the Coronation Honours List of peerages. Lord Salisbury absolutely refused. The King insisted; Lord Salisbury resigned. This is the story. Its authenticity cannot be established.[1] He retired to Hatfield, the historic home of the Salisbury family, and passed the brief leisure remaining after a busy career in his chemical laboratory. He died on 22nd August 1903.

The man who became Prime Minister when Lord Salisbury retired was Arthur James Balfour. He had entered the House of Commons in 1874 and had attended the Congress of Berlin in 1878. He now became Prime Minister for the first (and only) time, taking over a large Conservative majority of the House which had been won during the South African War in the "Khaki Election" of October 1900. This majority gradually disintegrated through the action of time (the Conservative party were in power from 1886–92 and 1895–1905), and through the Tariff Reform campaign of Joseph Chamberlain, which, naturally, split the party.

The crown of Great Britain is strictly constitutional without any sort of party attachment, inclination, or affinity. Probably, it would appear, King Edward was by character and tradition inclined to a "Whig" disposition.

[1] S. Lee, *op. cit.* ii. p. 159. Quoting Edward Legge, *King George and the Royal Family.*

He certainly had popular sympathies ; and he was deeply interested in social reform. He did not discourage his Ministers in the energetic social policies which were inaugurated in his reign.

The Conservative Government of Mr Balfour, important — indeed momentous—in foreign affairs, did some exceedingly useful work in domestic affairs too. The Education Act of 1902 was a measure of first-rate importance. The School Boards, set up under the Education Act of 1870, provided some " secondary " education in their Higher Grade Schools ; something was also done for secondary education by way of evening classes held under the County or Borough authority ; otherwise there was no public provision. The Act of 1902 abolished the School Boards and made education—elementary as well as secondary—the responsibility of the County Council and Borough Council. The existing Grammar Schools and Public Schools were not affected by this Act, unless they chose to take advantage of it and come under the local authorities. New secondary schools were established and have produced the present excellent system of English secondary schools. A similar Act was passed for Scotland.

The Irish Land Purchase Act of 1903 was the work of George Wyndham, Chief Secretary for Ireland. It completed the series of Land Acts which Mr Gladstone inaugurated in Queen Victoria's reign. The generous terms offered by the Act induced a large proportion of Irish landlords to sell, and a large proportion of tenants to purchase. The State advanced the money for purchasing the land from the landlord. Three and a half per cent. paid annually by the purchaser on the amount of money thus advanced was to pay off the whole loan in sixty-eight and a half years. In 1932 the Government of the Irish Free State, which had the duty of collecting the annuities and of remitting them to the British Government, stopped payment. It continued to collect, but refused to remit.

Besides its important domestic legislation (which comprised other Acts besides the Education and Irish Land Purchase Acts), the Balfour Government held a Colonial Conference with Prime Ministers of the self-governing colonies, as they were called then, in 1902. The first Colonial Conference took place in 1887, the year of Queen Victoria's Jubilee. The Conference of 1902 was the fourth. It showed little interest in the subjects which the British Government wanted it to discuss (constitutional relations and defence), but was eager to put forward its views on trade and tariffs. Every self-governing British colony had constructed a tariff for itself, so all the colonial premiers agreed that free trade within the Empire was impossible ; but they also agreed that " Imperial preference " was possible and desirable. Imperial preference, in the view of the colonial premiers, implied that Great Britain should tariff imports from foreign countries and charge a lower rate, or no rate, against imports from the colonies. On their side, the colonies, which already tariffed imports alike from

foreign countries and from Great Britain, would give the United Kingdom a preference. Joseph Chamberlain, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, became converted to this point of view. Unable to convert the rest of the Cabinet to "Tariff Reform," he resigned, and devoted the rest of his active life to promoting the movement throughout the country. The Conservative party was thus divided into free traders and tariff reformers, the free traders being still in a large majority. The Liberal and Labour Parties were uncompromising free traders.

The King took an active interest in the doings of his Ministers. The Education Act of 1902 and the Irish Land Purchase Act of 1903 had his warm approval. He was anxious to revive his old plan for the assuaging of Irish sentiment by abolishing the Viceroyalty (which was a political post held by party men), and having a royal prince as his deputy. Unfortunately the historian, W. H. Lecky, when asked by the Cabinet, advised against the King's plan. The Viceroys, Lecky said, had always been unpopular. Apparently he feared that the King's royal deputy might become unpopular too. In 1903 the King made a very successful visit to Ireland, visiting Dublin, Cork, Waterford, Kilkenny, Belfast. Before coming to Ireland he asked the Under-Secretary, Sir Anthony MacDonnell, why the Irish were discontented. MacDonnell said that they wanted education and security of land tenure. "I shall come," replied the King, "bearing an Education Act in one hand and a Land Purchase Act in the other." He was received with an unaffected welcome by the people.

When Joseph Chamberlain gave notice of resignation from the Cabinet in 1903 over the Tariff Reform question, the King tried hard to mediate, so as to keep Chamberlain in the Cabinet, and proposed that the case for and against Tariff Reform should be investigated by a Royal Commission. Mr Balfour, however, did not take up this suggestion. The King's personal views are said to have been for free trade. The resignation of Chamberlain weakened the Cabinet; and though Mr Balfour reconstructed it with the help of some energetic and more youthful politicians, the Government lost support in the country and he resigned on 4th December 1905. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman formed a Government which, at the following General Election, 6th January 1906, obtained an overwhelming majority of votes.

The Government of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman was one of the most powerful that British politics ever produced; powerful in personnel, by reason of the eminent people who composed it, and powerful by reason of its commanding majority in the House of Commons. It immediately took up a programme of social reform. Later, the Cabinet tackled two important measures of "Imperial" significance: Irish Home Rule and South African Union. The King knew the Prime Minister well. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, like King Edward, was fond of travelling on the Continent, knew Paris and Parisian

society, and was, with his wife, whose health was not good, a regular visitor to Marienbad, the cosmopolitan Bohemian spa, where King Edward regularly went. In the first year of Sir Henry's Prime Ministership, he and his wife went as usual in August to Marienbad, while King Edward was there. Lady Campbell-Bannerman's illness grew worse and she died at Marienbad on 30th August. The King showed the liveliest sympathy with Sir Henry, and was a true friend to him; took over the arrangements of the funeral, and attended the funeral himself. Politically the King had not much sympathy with this Prime Minister, who attacked the House of Lords and who consulted the King very little, and sent him only brief and uninforming reports of Cabinet and other matters. Their personal relations with each other were, nevertheless, excellent, although there was a continual friction, of a mild kind, between them about honours. King Edward took the greatest possible interest in the conferring of peerages, baronetcies, knighthoods, and any sort of honour. He and the Prime Minister had many a dispute about this, the King by no means liking the "political" honour lists of the Prime Minister, and Campbell-Bannerman on his side objecting to the King's numerous suggestions in favour of people unconnected with the Liberal party. Campbell-Bannerman's best work was done in helping towards the appeasement of South Africa. Chinese labourers, introduced after the Boer War in order to re-start the mines, were, as their contracts expired, sent home, although not until 1910 were they all gone. As soon as he became Prime Minister, Campbell-Bannerman began to prepare a measure of self-government for the Transvaal and Orange River Colony; this came into force in 1908. The first Prime Minister of the Transvaal was Louis Botha, who had been the chief Boer general at the end of the war. This remarkable achievement, the establishing of two completely self-governing colonies (Dominions) where five years earlier the white races had been in bitter war, was only the prelude to something on a still greater scale. In 1909 the four colonies—Cape Colony, Natal, Orange River, and Transvaal—became the Union of South Africa. The first Prime Minister of the new South African Government was General Botha.

The King took a tremendous interest in overseas affairs. When the Campbell-Bannerman Government decided to suspend the Chinese Labour Ordinance in the Transvaal, and the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord Elgin, sent off the despatch from London without submitting it first to the King, a sharp rebuke was at once administered. Lord Knollys, the Private Secretary, was instructed to write to Lord Elgin: [1]

> The King directs me to point out to you that it is his constitutional right to have all despatches of any importance, especially those initiating or relating to a change of policy, laid before him prior to its being decided upon. This "right" was always

[1] S. Lee, *op. cit.* ii. p. 479, 22nd December 1905.

observed during Queen Victoria's reign, and likewise by the late Government since the King succeeded to the throne.

When the fifth Colonial Conference met in London in 1907 the King, acting, of course, on the advice of the Prime Minister, made General Botha (who attended as a colonial premier) a Privy Councillor. The two men, English King and Boer general, established excellent personal relations with each other. At this Colonial Conference, the title was for the future changed to Dominions Conference. After returning to the Transvaal, General Botha proposed (August 1907) to his Parliament that the Transvaal Government should acquire the Cullinan Diamond (the largest diamond in the world, taken in a Pretoria mine in 1905) and present it to the King. The proposal went through the Transvaal Legislative Assembly with forty-two votes for, and nineteen against. The British Cabinet hesitated about advising the King to accept the offer of the diamond, particularly because the vote had not been unanimous, although in the circumstances of Transvaal politics, after the Boer War, a unanimous vote was really impossible to conceive. King Edward, who was at Marienbad, telegraphed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, " It would never do to snub them "—meaning the loyal Boers. The Cabinet still hesitated (although of opinion that refusal would be difficult), until the King said that he had " made up his mind to accept." He added that when the acceptance of the Transvaal's offer was publicly announced a statement should be added, " that the diamond had been accepted on the recommendation of the Cabinet." So there could be no question of a merely personal policy of the King.

The lifelong love of travelling, which Edward VII. did not abandon as King, contributed towards a reputation for diplomatic activity which was, to a large extent at any rate, legendary. The King liked to visit Paris, Biarritz, Marienbad, Copenhagen every year. When it was possible, he preferred sea travel to journeying by land. If he was on the Royal yacht he could extend his journey so as to include Lisbon, Athens, Naples. His travels were made for pleasure, relaxation, and also from the instinct to observe, to know, to exchange ideas. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Sir Edward Grey, did not himself like travelling, so he left the duty of officially accompanying the King to Sir Charles Hardinge of the Foreign Office, a professional diplomatist. Hardinge's position and training seemed to connect the King's journeys with direct diplomatic activity, rather than with the restraints and limitations which the presence of a Cabinet Minister was understood to impose on the British monarch. Sir Edward Grey, of course, could not have been spared from his duties as a member of the Cabinet to go with the King on all the long royal travels, but he could (and probably should) have gone on the most important journeys, to Cronberg in 1906, and to Reval in 1908.

The Cronberg visit took place at a time when the relations between King

Edward VII. and his nephew William II., which had been somewhat embittered since the Boer War, were becoming cordial again. They carried on a friendly correspondence in English. The Kaiser had been piqued by the King's going to Marienbad (in Bohemia) without stopping to see him on the way. So in August 1906 King Edward broke his outward journey at Frankfurt, and went out from there to the Castle of Cronberg where the Kaiser was staying. The visit lasted only for a day and a half and was sociably pleasant. In political conversation the King and Kaiser discussed the coming Hague Peace Conference (which took place in 1907), and the German naval policy. The King appears to have "confined himself to generalities." Hardinge, however, had more explicit conversation.

> The Emperor began by saying that in his opinion the approaching Hague Conference was great nonsense, and that it would be much better if the questions to be discussed were settled by direct negotiation between the Governments concerned without consulting the small Powers who had neither trade nor other interests involved, and that if Germany and England held out, the date of the Conference could be indefinitely postponed. I replied that even were we so disposed it would be rather late in the day to adopt such a policy, since we had already expressed our opinion on the programme to be discussed and, if no objections were raised to our views, it would be difficult now to back out of it without laying ourselves open to a charge of bad faith. Moreover, the late war had shown that with a view to restricting as much as possible the causes and area of conflict, it is very necessary to arrive at an understanding on such questions as what constitutes contraband of war, the right of sinking ships and under what circumstances, etc. It would also be interesting to know the views of Europe on the subject of the reduction of armaments. . . .
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> The Emperor then turned to the question of disarmament, and remarked that when people talk of the reduction of military forces Germans only smile. The German nation had not forgotten the Peace of Tilsit, and ever since they had been firmly resolved to exist by the strength of their right arm and for this they had built up their overwhelming army of the present day. In any war with France, Germany would be able to place in the field three million more men than France, and would crush France by sheer weight of numbers. As for Russia, it would be a long time before the Russian army could be reorganised. Germany, owing to her position between two great military powers, was compelled to maintain a powerful military organisation, and he thanked God that such was the case. For the last hundred years the idea of military service had become so ingrained in the people, that it is now regarded almost as a disgrace not to have served in the army, and every year he received thousands of letters from the parents of young men rejected owing to some physical defect, imploring him to take their sons into the army. Moreover, it was a delusion to think that military service interfered with the commerce of the country. Merchants and shopkeepers take military service into account and prefer to take into their employment the ex-soldiers, whom they regard as superior in every way to the ordinary civilian young man.
>
> His Majesty then dwelt upon the attitude of the French, remarking that the French

Sir Luke Fildes, R.A.

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EDWARD VII.

nation is a bundle of nerves, and a female race not a male race like the Anglo-Saxons and Teutons. The underlying idea of their policy is that of the *revanche*, but they are unable to obtain it of themselves. It was for this reason that they had made an alliance with Russia and later an *entente* with England, but that they are disappointed with the latter as not coming up to their expectations, since they have realised, as he himself had done, the intense desire of England for peace. He expressed his conviction that the French people, apart from the Nationalists and followers of M. Delcassé, are equally desirous of peace, and that this is a great safeguard for the future. . . .

The Emperor complained that English Secretaries of State never visited Berlin, and that it was desirable that they and Germans of note should know each other, also that people of London society seldom come to Germany although they frequented greatly Paris and Rome. I could hardly tell his Majesty that the attractions of Berlin compare unfavourably with those of Paris and Rome, but I mentioned the fact that Mr Brodrick had been to Berlin two or three years ago and that Mr Haldane proposed to visit Berlin very shortly. The Emperor expressed great pleasure at the prospect of Mr Haldane's visit, remarking that the King had spoken of him as one of the cleverest men in England.[1]

In August 1908 the King with Sir Charles Hardinge, again visited the Kaiser at Cronberg. Grey, who did not accompany the King, gave him a memorandum on the naval question for discussion with the Kaiser, but the King found that it was inopportune ; nothing could be done at this time.

The Reval (now called Talinn) meeting was made the year after the inception of the Anglo-Russian Entente of 1907. King Edward VII. and Queen Alexandra with a splendid suite (not, however, including the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs) arrived in the Royal yacht at Reval on 9th June 1908. In their company were Admiral Sir John Fisher, General Sir John French, Sir Arthur Nicolson (Ambassador at St Petersburg), and Sir Charles Hardinge. The Tsar Nicholas II. and the Tsarina, with the Russian Premier, Stolypin, and the Russian Foreign Minister, Isvolsky, were there for the meeting. When the visit was over, Sir Charles Hardinge reported to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs :

The Emperor repeatedly expressed his great satisfaction at the visit of the King and Queen, which, he said, sealed and confirmed the intention and spirit of the Anglo-Russian Agreement, and he expressed his profound conviction that the friendly sentiments which now prevail between the two governments could only mature and grow stronger with the progress of time to the mutual advantage of both countries. There might be occasional divergence of views in small matters, but the identity of the national interests of England and Russia in Europe and Asia would far outweigh any possible results from such trivial differences of opinion. A glance at the Russian press of all shades and opinions showed conclusively how extremely popular throughout Russia the King's visit had become, and how it was welcomed as the visible sign of a new era in Anglo-Russian relations. On my expressing my surprise that such

[1] *British Documents on the Origins of the War*, iii. pp. 368–69.

papers as the *Novoe Vremja*, which I had always regarded when in Russia as the bitterest foe of England, had now become the ardent supporters of an Anglo-Russian understanding, His Majesty admitted that he also was astonished at the rapidity with which the feeling had spread, and that he had never been so surprised as when he had read recently in a Chauvinistic "rag" called the *Sviet* a warm article in praise of England, and urging closer relations between the two countries. Since the liberty of the press had been established in Russia, the press had really become the reflex of public opinion, and it was astonishing to see the complete unanimity that prevails as to the necessity of warm and friendly relations with England. The idea had taken firm root amongst the people, and it only required now to be carefully fostered to bear fruit in the future.[1]

The Russian Foreign Minister, Isvolsky, reported: "The general impression which this meeting had left was an extremely favourable one from a political point of view. King Edward openly expressed his satisfaction, and sees in this meeting a confirmation and strengthening of the agreement reached between Russia and England, as well as a pledge for the further solidarity of both Governments. His Majesty emphasised with particular satisfaction the hopeful turn of affairs in our domestic politics and the approval which the activity of Secretary of State, Stolypin, has met with in serious English circles."

After the meeting with the Kaiser at Cronberg in August 1908, the King, with Sir Charles Hardinge, went on to Ischl in Upper Austria, the favourite watering-place of the Emperor Francis Joseph. The King wished the Austrian Emperor to use his influence with the German Emperor in the direction of moderating the German naval rivalry with Great Britain; Francis Joseph, however, felt that he could do nothing: the naval question continued to poison Anglo-German relations. From Ischl, King Edward went to Marienbad, the fashionable spa (all the more fashionable because he frequented it) where the atmosphere buzzed with the high diplomatic affairs of Europe. Whenever King Edward was at Marienbad, at the height of the Ischl season numerous other high statesmen and diplomats would be found there, as well as leading journalists from London, Paris, Berlin, and Vienna. On this occasion, when the King arrived in Marienbad on 15th August 1908, he was told by Mr. Wickkam Steed, the Vienna correspondent of *The Times*, that Austria-Hungary was going to annex Bosnia-Herzegovina. These Turkish provinces had been, by authority of Article 25 of the Treaty of Berlin, occupied and administered by Austria-Hungary since 1878; but the sovereignty over the provinces belonged to Turkey, and the Turkish flag flew at the provincial capitals Mostar and Sarajevo. For Austria-Hungary to annex the provinces outright might not make much practical difference to the situation there, but, if done without the consent of the Berlin Signatory Powers, would be a breach of the public law of Europe. The King, when Mr Wickkam Steed informed him of the report of the coming annexation,

[1] *British Documents*, v. pp. 243–4.

said, " I cannot believe that ; it would upset the whole of Europe." Nevertheless it happened. On 3rd October the Austro-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Baron Aerenthal, announced the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Europe escaped by a hair's-breadth a war between Austria-Hungary, backed by Germany, on the one hand, and Serbia, backed by Russia, on the other. If such a war had taken place, it is probable that France, by reason of the Franco-Russian Alliance of 1893, and Great Britain, by reason of the Franco-British *entente* of 1904 and Russo-British *entente* of 1907, would have been involved. The news of the Austro-Hungarian annexation of the two provinces struck the King as a betrayal of the public law of Europe. He was at Balmoral at the time. Lord Redesdale wrote : " No one who was there can forget how terribly he was upset. Never did I see him so moved." The international crisis was painful and long drawn-out. Serbia and Austria-Hungary mobilised their troops. A European War, however, was averted on this occasion by Russia, hitherto plainly on the side of Serbia, giving way before the diplomatic pressure exercised by Austria-Hungary's ally, Germany. With Russia prepared to agree with the Austrian annexation of the provinces, Serbia could not maintain its protest. The British and French Governments insisted that the law of nations should be formally observed by the Powers giving their assent to the suppression of Article 25 of the Treaty of Berlin—that is, to the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. By the middle of April 1909 the crisis was over. The King felt that as a mark of disapproval of the Austrian conduct he should not go to Marienbad that summer, but on the advice of Sir Fairfax Cartwright, British Ambassador at Vienna, he consented to make his usual visit to the Bohemian watering-place. He refused, however, Cartwright's advice that he should congratulate Aerenthal on being promoted by the Austrian Emperor from the rank of Baron to that of Count. The King's conduct, at any rate, was more diplomatic than that of the German Emperor who, visiting Vienna on 21st September 1910, made a public speech to the municipal authorities. They had resolved to name a portion of the Ring (a public park) after him. The Kaiser said, " Methinks I read in your resolve the agreement of the city of Vienna with the action of an ally in taking his stand in shining armour at a grave moment by the side of your most gracious sovereign."

On 1st April 1908 Campbell-Bannerman, who was an old man and suffered from heart-trouble, resigned from the Prime Ministry. King Edward was at Biarritz at the time. As his biographer writes, " Departing from constitutional tradition the King did not return to England." [1] He called upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr H. H. Asquith, to form a government and summoned him to Biarritz to receive the appointment as Prime Minister. There was

[1] S. Lee, *op. cit.* ii. p. 581.

some protest in Parliament at this procedure. Mr Asquith journeyed to Biarritz, put on a frock coat, went to the King's hotel where he was received by Edward VII., also in a frock coat. The King said, " I appoint you Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury." Asquith knelt down and kissed the King's hand. After that he breakfasted with the King (8th April).[1]

Campbell-Bannerman died three weeks later, on 27th April, while the King was on a visit to Copenhagen.

[1] Spender and Asquith, *Life of Asquith*, i. p. 197.

CHAPTER X

THE STRUGGLE OF THE LORDS: THE DILEMMA OF EDWARD VII. AND GEORGE V.

THE LIBERAL GOVERNMENT which came into office with Campbell-Bannerman at the end of 1905 faced tremendous tasks with simply exuberant activity. In foreign affairs it carried on the *entente* with France, made the *entente* with Russia, worked hard for a navy-limitation agreement with Germany, and faced dangerous complications with regard to Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Balkans. In home affairs it undertook an elaborate programme of social reform; resumed the fateful effort for Irish Home Rule which had destroyed the powerful ministries of Mr Gladstone; and set out to alter the British constitution by restricting and defining the powers of the House of Lords. All these terrific legislative impacts and efforts, largely due to the dynamic personality of Mr Lloyd George, put a great strain on the constitutional position of the Crown. The people were deeply divided on certain of the issues, particularly regarding Irish Home Rule and the powers of the House of Lords. The King, who was by the custom of the constitution bound to accept the advice of the Government, had also the duty of interpreting the will of the people. Also, besides accepting advice, he had the constitutional function of giving it, a delicate task at all times and all the more so in questions involving deep feelings and the personal inclinations of himself and his ministers.

The "social reform" part of the programme did not offer any special difficulties to the King. The Old Age Pensions Bill was enacted in 1908; the National Health Insurance Act in 1911. These are only two items in a big list of Acts relating to unemployment, underpaid "sweated" labour, merchant shipping, trade unions, feeding of school children, education, and other social economic affairs. R. B. Haldane, Secretary of State for War, carried into effect a very important scheme of army reorganisation, creating the Territorial Force out of the old "Volunteers," and establishing an Expeditionary Force of the Regular Army, equipped and trained for foreign service at the shortest notice.

All this cost a great deal of money. Mr Lloyd George, who had been President of the Board of Trade, succeeded Mr Asquith as Chancellor of the Exchequer on Asquith's becoming Prime Minister in 1908. Mr Lloyd George's first budget, that of 1909, brought the dispute between the House of Lords and the Government majority in the House of Commons to a head. It was not the increase in the death-duties and income-tax which did this, although these modest increases

(income tax from one shilling to one-and-twopence in the £) were labelled by critics as "confiscatory." It was the Land Taxes which aroused the fierce resistance of the Peers and indeed divided the whole country into two camps. Mr Lloyd George proposed that "unearned increment" of land should pay a duty of 20 per cent. when the land changed hands; and that owners of undeveloped land and minerals should pay a duty of ½d. in the £ on its capital value. Owners of land already paid tax on the income-value of their land, but this proposed taxation of capital land-values was called by the owners not only confiscatory and socialist but sheer predatory robbery. On 30th November 1909, the House of Lords rejected the Budget by 350 votes to 75. This was probably what Mr Lloyd George really hoped for. The Prime Minister, Mr Asquith, at once introduced, and the House of Commons passed, a resolution: "That the action of the House of Lords in refusing to pass into law the financial provisions made by this House for the service of the year is a breach of the constitution and a usurpation of the rights of the Commons." A General Election was held in the following January. The Government received a majority of 124 votes; the numbers were: Liberals 275, Labour 40, Irish Nationalists 82, Unionists (Conservatives) 273. The total voting strength of the Government was accordingly 397. The country had thus endorsed the view that the Peers had violated constitutional custom by rejecting a finance bill. It was assumed, at any rate by the Liberals, that Mr Asquith either had received or would receive an assurance from the King that the crown would accept advice to create a sufficient number of peers to give a majority to the Government in the House of Lords. King Edward, however, had stipulated that he would not create additional peers unless the Government's policy were endorsed at a second general election. This decision of the King was kept secret by Mr Asquith to whom the King had communicated it on 15th December 1909.[1]

When the new Parliament met, Mr Asquith introduced into the House of Commons resolutions to become the basis of a "Parliament Act," restricting the powers of the House of Lords. The resolutions were passed by majorities of about 100. The Parliament Bill was then introduced and read for the first time. The budget (of 1909) was passed again through the House of Commons and sent up to the House of Lords which passed it, without troubling to divide (28th April 1910). A week later, 6th May, King Edward died suddenly of heart-asthma.

GEORGE FREDERICK ERNEST ALBERT was born on 3rd June 1865, the second son of King Edward VII. and Queen Alexandra, at that time Prince and Princess of Wales. He and his elder brother, the Duke of Clarence, were educated by a private tutor, the Reverend J. N. Dalton, curate of Sandringham and later

[1] R. C. K. Ensor, *England*, 1870–1914 (1936), p. 419.

Canon of Windsor. The two boys, one at the age of thirteen, the other at twelve, were sent to the *Britannia* as cadets in training for the Royal Navy. After passing through the *Britannia* course they became midshipmen on the *Bacchante* and cruised in the West Indies, the Pacific, and the Mediterranean.

When the *Bacchante* was paid off at Portsmouth on 31st August 1882, the Duke of Clarence left the Navy for the Army; but King George continued his career as a serving sailor. He was promoted sub-lieutenant in 1884 and went through the course in seamanship and gunnery at Greenwich. In 1886 he was promoted lieutenant and served for most of the next four years in the Mediterranean. In 1889 he had command of a torpedo boat. In 1890–91 he was in command of the gunboat *Thrush* in the North Atlantic. He was a keen officer, an excellent seaman, and specially qualified in gunnery. The death of his elder brother in 1892, however, necessarily brought to an end his active career in the Navy in which he had expected to find his lifelong work.

On 6th July 1893, Prince George was married at the Chapel Royal, St James's, to Princess Mary, daughter of the Duke of Teck. The next seven years were spent chiefly in the social and ceremonial duties which fall to an Heir Presumptive of the Throne. In 1901 the Prince and Princess (their official titles were Duke and Duchess of York) sailed to Australia, where, on 9th May 1901, the Prince opened the first Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia. This voyage of the Prince and Princess, made in the *Ophir*, included visits not only to the Australian states, but to New Zealand, Ceylon, Singapore, and South Africa.

The Prince's father was now King, and the Duke of York, made Prince of Wales, had more exacting duties than ever. In 1905 the Prince and Princess of Wales sailed to India on H.M.S. *Renown*. In 1908 the Prince went, for the sixth time, to Canada. No prince had ever succeeded to the throne of England with so deep and wide a knowledge, acquired by travel, of the British Empire; his eldest son, however, was to outdo him in this respect.

George V., on his accession, had to face nothing less than a constitutional crisis of the first magnitude. The Government, relying on its powerful majority in the House of Commons, was determined to restrict the "veto" which the House of Lords had for centuries possessed over legislation. It was also determined, as soon as the obstacle of the Lords' veto had been removed, to pass an Irish Home Rule Bill into law. The Conservative party was absolutely opposed to both measures, particularly to the Irish Home Rule Bill; they obstructed both, as each bill was vitally connected with the other. The cleavage between Liberals and Conservatives over these questions was deep, and consciousness of division was bitter. It was the stuff of which civil war is made, such civil war as took place in the England of the seventeenth century and as was plainly threatened in the Ireland of the twentieth. "Unionists" and "Home Rulers"

were arming in Ireland. Arms were being secretly collected in Ulster and in the rest of Ireland; "generals" and "chiefs of staff" were being appointed. The Protestant Ulstermen openly asserted that they would fight rather than submit to Roman Catholic "Home Rule," and the Conservative party in Great Britain, through Mr Bonar Law, the leader of the party, openly promised assistance to Ulster.

The first thing which the new King did in order to meet the constitutional crisis was to propose that a constitutional conference should be held. The heads of the parties agreed, and a conference of four Liberals—Asquith, Lloyd George, Birrell, Earl of Crewe—and four Conservatives—Balfour, Austen Chamberlain, Marquis of Lansdowne, Earl of Cawdor—(without the presence of the King) met at the Prime Minister's house, 10 Downing Street. The Liberals were willing to accept a compromise in regard to the Parliament Bill, but the Conservatives would only agree to such a Bill as would enable them to prevent Irish Home Rule: on this point—Irish Home Rule—neither party would give way. Mr Lloyd George, who perceived that the international (as well as the Irish) situation was growing dangerous, proposed that there should be a "Party Truce," and that a Coalition Government of Liberals and Unionist Conservatives should be formed. Mr Balfour was in favour of this statesmanlike plan, but he could not carry the rank-and-file of his party with him.[1] The conference came to nothing. King George then endorsed the undertaking which King Edward had given to Mr Asquith, that the Crown would consent to create a sufficient number of peers to overcome the resistance of the Conservatives—but not until the opinion of the country should again have been tested. Accordingly, a general election was held (December 1910); it merely confirmed the results of the last election. The country as a whole—even without the Irish Nationalist vote—supported the Government. After this the passage of the Parliament Bill was inevitable. The Conservative majority in the House of Lords still showed itself determined to reject the Bill. Mr Balfour and Lord Lansdowne were thereupon privately told of the King's pledge to create new peers. The list which should be submitted to the King was already prepared. It is reproduced in *The Life of Asquith*, by J. A. Spender and Cyril Asquith, vol. i. pp. 329–31. It contains two hundred and forty-nine names, some of well-known scholars, and many of the more stalwart and safe rank-and-file of Liberal politicians.

In spite of this the issue of the Parliament Bill remained in doubt until the last moment, until the final, historic debate in the House of Lords on the night of 9th August 1911. The speeches on this occasion were unsurpassed for gravity and measured eloquence, alike from the Government side, the "cross-

[1] D. Lloyd George, *War Memoirs* (1933), i. pp. 36–37. This affair is also described by Sir A. Chamberlain in *Politics from Inside* (1936).

bench" peers, and the "die-hard" section of the Tory party. The Bill was carried by only 131 to 114 votes. Twenty-nine Conservative peers voted with the Government; without them the Bill would not have been carried. The bulk of the Conservative peers, led by Lord Lansdowne, abstained from voting. The Parliament Act strictly limited the powers of the House of Lords. It left them without any power either to amend or reject a finance bill; a bill other than finance, passed in the House of Commons, can be delayed by the House of Lords during three successive sessions, but no longer if the House of Commons pass it three times.

Many people thought that the Parliament Act was the end of the House of Lords as an effective revising body or bulwark of the constitution. The whole episode had placed the new King in a cruel dilemma; "he was criticised with asperity by Lord Hugh Cecil."[1] It is difficult—probably impossible—to see how, as a strictly constitutional King, he could have acted otherwise than he did. Extra-constitutional solutions of the *coup d'état* type have fortunately never been fashionable in England. Nor, in point of fact, have the Peers lost anything by their acquiescence in the Parliament Act. With the good sense usually characteristic of English political life, they have made the most of their not inconsiderable powers under the Act, and have actually increased the prestige and influence of their House which had woefully declined under "die-hard" control.

The Government had insisted on the passing of the Parliament Bill not in order to secure the passage of their budgets, for though the Peers had rejected the Budget of 1909, they had passed it in 1910 and were obviously never going to reject another. It was particularly to enable the Home Rule Bill to go through Parliament that the Government had determined to allow the Peers only a "suspensive" veto.

The Third Irish Home Rule Bill was introduced in the House of Commons in April 1912. The First Home Rule Bill of 1886 had aimed at establishing an Irish Legislature at Dublin with limited powers and without any Irish representation at Westminster. The Second Home Rule Bill of 1894 provided for Irish representation at Westminster only when matters of Irish or Imperial concern were to be voted on. The Third Home Rule Bill of 1912 allowing, like the Bills of 1886 and 1894, for an Irish Legislature at Dublin, also allowed for forty-two Irish members of the Imperial Parliament without any special limitation on their functions. The Bill, naturally, was designed to apply to the whole of Ireland; and as the Government had a large majority in the House of Commons and could, under the Parliament Act, ignore after two years the veto of the House of Lords, the passage of the Bill through both Houses and the assent of the King were certainties. The majority of people in Ulster

[1] Ensor, *op. cit.* p. 231.

were opposed to the prospect of Irish Home Rule; it is impossible to say whether or not they would have maintained their opposition after the Bill should have become law, if the Conservative party in England had not encouraged them to resist. In January 1912, after the passage into law of the Parliament Bill and when the introduction of the Home Rule Bill into the House of Commons was imminent, the Protestants of Ulster began to form a volunteer force and to draft a scheme for a " provisional government " which would take over the administration of Ulster as soon as the Home Rule Bill should pass into law and in spite of it. The Conservative party in England, through its leader, Mr Bonar Law (who made a declaration at Blenheim Palace, 27th July 1912), explicitly promised to support this Ulster movement. The " Blenheim Pledge " looks like an undertaking to support disobedience to the law and to assist civil war.

By the autumn of 1913 the Home Rule Bill had been passed twice in the House of Commons and had been rejected twice in the House of Lords. One more passage through the House of Commons would make it law. The Ulstermen had already collected arms and were drilling hard; in the rest of the island, in " Southern Ireland," there was now arming and drilling, too. The devil of private armies had come into Ireland, with the encouragement of a great English party, champion of law and order. Mr Bonar Law now made a proposal that King George should dismiss the Prime Minister, Mr Asquith; this, owing to Asquith's large majority in the House of Commons, would involve the dissolution of Parliament and the holding of a general election. Here was the second cruel dilemma—the first was the dispute over the Parliament Bill—in which King George was placed in the first three years of his reign; he seemed to have a choice only between supporting the lawful democratic government on the one hand, at the risk of civil war, or on the other of violating the custom of the Constitution. Nevertheless, as always throughout his reign, the King went steadily on his way, finding amid the maze of political pressure put upon him the straightforward thing to be done. This simple English gentleman, trained to the sea and devoted to country sport and the open air, had political tact and good sense that never failed him. Although not temperamentally patient or easygoing, he refused to be hustled into strange courses or sudden decisions. Gradually the mature statesmen, his seniors in age and political experience, who were so free with their counsel to him, came to rely upon him for counsel in the increasing difficulties of the age. The King did not dismiss the Prime Minister; and he accepted advice, according to the Constitution, only from his constitutional adviser; but he used his position as one above party and as head of English society to bring the contesting statesmen together in the friendly circle of Balmoral. Mr Bonar Law, Leader of the Conservative Party, and Mr Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty and at the moment the

most active minister in carrying forward Home Rule, were invited to Balmoral. They engaged in conversation there, but still could find no way to bridge the gulf between Home Rulers and Unionists.

The unhappy controversy dragged on into 1914 when an exciting incident, popularly called the Curragh Mutiny (20th March) took place. It was not a mutiny, because the officers at the Curragh Camp near Dublin were offered by their commander-in-chief the choice between resigning or serving, if ordered, against the Ulstermen. Naturally, a considerable number said that they would prefer to resign. The Cabinet handled this situation feebly, but the officers were persuaded to withdraw their resignations.

There is no doubt that the King was greatly disturbed by this bungling which had brought the army into politics. He now (acting, of course, only in consultation with the Prime Minister) convened in July a conference of the party leaders: Asquith and Lloyd George, Liberals; Bonar Law and Lansdowne, Conservatives; Craig and Carson, Ulster Unionists; Redmond and Dillon, Irish Nationalists. The conference took place at Buckingham Palace and was opened by the King himself with a speech on the situation (21st July 1914). His Majesty spoke of the gravity of the words " civil war " already on the lips of responsible people. It lasted for four days without reaching any agreement: a bridge could not be found between the demand of the Ulstermen (backed by the Conservatives) for exclusion from Home Rule, and the refusal of the Irish Nationalists (backed by the Liberals) to agree to anything except a united Ireland. On the day that the conference broke up, 25th July 1914, news arrived that the Austro-Hungarian Government had delivered an ultimatum to Serbia. In the next " twelve days " Europe rushed to an abyss in which the very moderate Home Rule Bill and a great many other regretted things passed beyond recall.

The *tempo* (to use a word then becoming fashionable) of foreign affairs had been growing more insistent ever since the reign began. As far as Great Britain was concerned the German Fleet Law was the disturbing element. Germany's " will to power," however, did not only express itself in the fleet. It had colonial ambition. A German company was constructing a railway which was to connect Constantinople with Baghdad and on to the Persian Gulf. The German Government was very anxious about German interests in Morocco, and not without some reason, as the French authorities were assuming more and more control of the country. There had been serious trouble between the French and German Governments over Morocco in 1905, settled, however, for a time by the Conference of Algeciras, 1906, which confirmed German commercial rights. In 1911 trouble arose again when the French occupied Fez, the capital, though they evacuated it again after restoring order. This time there was nearly war between France and Germany; and through a speech of Mr Lloyd George

(Mansion House, 21st July 1911) the British Government practically intimated that it would be on the French side.

The agitation in foreign affairs was surpassed in intensity by domestic agitation in labour concerns. The years 1910 and 1911 were years of tremendous strikes or lockouts: in the Lancashire cotton factories; among the boiler-makers of the north-east of England; in the Welsh mines; in the Port of London; on the railways. The strikers were often violent aganist the authorities and quite undisciplined even towards their own unions. At Ton-y-Pandy in South Wales in 1910 the miners resisted for three days. Troops had to be brought from Salisbury Plain to restore order. During the railway strikes of 1911 troops were needed to clear the way for the few trains which were running. Passions of hatred seemed to be rending British society at home at a time when national passions and fears were subjecting the international order to intense strains; and all this where there was a Liberal Government in power devoted to peace abroad and social improvement at home—a government which might almost have been called pacifist and socialist. These were appalling circumstances for a constitutional monarch to view; and as *The Times* biographer of George V. said later: "It must have been with a keen sense of relief that the King on 11th November 1911 left the scene of all these controversies and, with the Queen, took ship in the *Medina* for India." He had been there in 1905, but this was the first time an English king visited India, or indeed any part of the British Empire outside the British Isles. As soon as he succeeded to the throne the King had made up his mind to go to India; it was, he declared on landing at Bombay, one of his first and most earnest desires.

At this time India was as disturbed as the rest of the world. The Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, had been bombed and wounded when entering Delhi on 23rd December 1912. Nevertheless the visit of the King and Queen passed without untoward incident, although not without risk. The prime object was the coronation of the Emperor of India at Delhi, following on the coronation of the King of England in London. Delhi had been the capital of the Moghul emperors, but British India had always had its capital at Calcutta. The coronation took place at Delhi on 12th December 1911.

The Durbar was one of the most gorgeous and significant ceremonies that the world has ever seen. From first to last it assumed the character of a solemn rite performed with stately and almost sacramental fervour in the presence of 100,000 people. First the King-Emperor read a speech of greeting from a dais. Then, each in order, the ruling chiefs did homage, the total number who took part in the ceremony, with provincial representatives, being 335. Their Majesties then proceeded to a pavilion, where they sat on thrones, silhouetted against the sky, in full view of the whole multitude. The Delhi herald read forthwith a proclamation announcing His Majesty's coronation. This was

followed by the announcement by the Governor-General of "the customary grants, concessions, reliefs and benefactions" which the King-Emperor had been "graciously pleased to bestow upon this glorious and memorable occasion." They included the immediate devoting of fifty lakhs of rupees to the promotion of popular education, and the extension of the Victoria Cross to the native officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the Indian Army.

Then, to the astonishment of the company, for the secret had been singularly well kept, the King-Emperor, taking a paper from the Governor-General, read in a clear voice the announcement of two momentous changes—the transfer of the capital to Delhi, and the practical reversal of the partition of Bengal.

The partition of Bengal had been made for purely administrative purposes by Lord Curzon, the Viceroy previous to Lord Hardinge, and somehow had gravely offended Indian opinion, at any rate in Bengal. The transference of the capital of India to Delhi was a much more important matter than the end of the brief experiment of Bengal's partition. *The Times* related a curious incident which occurred when the King was laying the foundation-stone of New Delhi:

> As he took the trowel in his hand and ran his eye along one of the stones he was heard to remark that the stone did not seem to him quite straight. His Majesty's keen eye had not deceived him. The stone, which had not then been finally adjusted, was slightly out of alignment, but the fault was immediately corrected. The incident was typical of King George's thorough and practical nature.

The visit to India ended with a week's shooting in Nepal; one day the King shot a tiger and a bear with a right and a left from the same gun. This kind of thing was his *forte*; this sailorman was probably the best shot in the Empire.

The royal party returned to England after an absence of three months, landing at Portsmouth on 5th February 1912. War was now going on in the Balkans. Ever since Austria-Hungary had annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908, the chronic unrest in the Balkans had increased and the position of Turkey had grown more insecure. In 1911 Italy made war upon Turkey and by 12th September had annexed Tripoli. No sooner was the Tripoli War over or nearly over than the Balkan states which had formed themselves into a Balkan League presented a note demanding that Turkey should reform administration of Macedonia according to Article 23 of the Treaty of Berlin. As the Porte rejected this note, the states of the Balkan League made war upon Turkey and speedily overran Macedonia and Thrace. The British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Sir Edward Grey, worked hard, and successfully, to localise the war. He arranged that a peace conference should meet in London, and peace was actually signed by all the belligerents in the Treaty of London, on 30th May 1913. According to this treaty the Turks were left possessing in Europe only Constantinople, the north coast of the Sea of Marmora, and the Gallipoli Peninsula.

This ended the First Balkan War (1912–13), but within a month a Second Balkan War, this time *within* the Balkan League, took place when the Bulgarians, discontented with their share of Macedonia and Thrace, attacked the Serb lines (30th June 1913). The brief but terrible war which ensued ended with the complete failure of the Bulgarians and their loss (Treaty of Bucharest—10th August 1913) of a good deal of the gains which they had spurned in the Treaty of London. The result of the Second Balkan War was to leave the Balkan area in a more inflammable condition than ever, for not only were the Bulgarians bitterly aggrieved and revengeful, but the great expansion of Serbia (which gained about half of Macedonia) and the increase of Serbian prestige caused very serious anxiety in the Austrian Foreign Office.

All this prepared the way for the fearful crisis that suddenly developed in Central Europe in the summer of 1914. The heir to the throne of the Habsburg Monarchy, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand d'Este, was assassinated along with his wife at Sarajevo in Bosnia on 28th June. The assassin, Gavrilo Princip, was an Austrian subject, a Bosnia Serb, but trained for assassination by a gang of conspirators at Belgrade where he was a student. The Austro-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count Berchtold, took the view that the assassination was just a glaring instance among others of the result of anti-Austrian, pro-Yugoslav,[1] propaganda carried on in the Kingdom of Serbia. Deciding that this must be stopped, he dispatched an ultimatum to the Serbian Government on 25th July; receiving what he considered to be an unsatisfactory reply, he broke off diplomatic relations on 27th July. Open war followed, and the rupture developed into European war between the Dual Alliance (Austria and Germany) and the Triple Entente (Russia, France, and Great Britain) from 3rd August, with other powers joining in the struggle at selected times.

The monarchs of Germany, Russia, Belgium, and Great Britain, and the President of France were in communication with each other in those twelve days (25th July to 3rd August) when the European peoples were rushing, almost blindly as it seemed, to doom. President Poincaré of France addressed to King George on 31st July an autograph letter which was delivered on the same evening; the President wrote:

> If Germany were convinced that the *entente cordiale* would be affirmed, in case of need, even to the extent of taking the field side by side, there would be the greatest chance that peace would remain unbroken.

King George, naturally, could give no such assurance as the President wished, without asking advice from the Prime Minister; and the Prime Minister could tender no advice in this direction because the British Cabinet was at the

[1] Yugoslavs or "Southern Slavs" is the name for all peoples of Serb stock found in Dalmatia, Croatia, the Hungarian Banat, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Old Serbia, and Macedonia.

moment disunited in its view of the action which Great Britain should take. The King, accordingly, in his reply to President Poincaré, dated 1st August, made no reference to the question of a British assurance of armed intervention. He said :

> I am personally using my best endeavours with the Empires of Russia and Germany towards finding some solution by which actual military operations may at any rate be postponed, and time be thus given for calm discussion between the Powers. I intend to prosecute these efforts without intermission so long as any hope remains of an amicable settlement.

On 29th July the Russian Government had ordered mobilisation of its forces on the Austro-Hungarian frontier ; and on the following day general mobilisation. The German Government presented, at midnight on 31st July, an ultimatum to Russia demanding suspension of mobilisation within twelve hours.

King George being informed of this at once sent a personal message to the Tsar :

> I cannot help thinking that some misunderstanding has produced this deadlock. I am most anxious not to miss any possibility of avoiding the terrible calamity which at present threatens the whole world. I therefore make a personal appeal to you to remove the misapprehension which I feel must have occurred, and to leave still open grounds for negotiation and possible peace. If you think that I can in any way contribute to this all-important purpose, I will do everything in my power to assist in reopening the interrupted conversations between the Powers concerned.

The Tsar, though he felt unable to suspend mobilisation, pledged himself in a moving appeal to the German Emperor (1st August) that, so long as negotiations with Austria on account of Serbia continued, his troops would take no provocative action—that is, would not cross the frontier. This was an offer to the effect that a German counter-mobilisation (inevitable in face of Russian mobilisation) would not be regarded as war. The German Government, however, would not agree to this and, on the expiry of the ultimatum to Russia, answered the Russian mobilisation with war (6.45 p.m., 1st August 1914).

Before this fatal *déclenchement* had taken place, King George had tried to establish touch and agreement with the German Emperor. Prince Henry of Prussia, the naval brother of the Kaiser William II., was in London towards the end of July and saw the King. Arriving back in Berlin on 29th July Prince Henry saw the Kaiser and telegraphed to King George : " William, who is very anxious, is doing his utmost to comply with the request of Nicholas to work for the maintenance of peace. . . . If you seriously and earnestly desire to prevent this terrible misfortune, may I propose to you to use your influence in France and also Russia that they should remain neutral." To this King George replied by telegraph (30th July).

I am very glad to hear of William's efforts to act with Nicholas for the maintenance of peace. I earnestly desire that such a misfortune as a European war—the evil of which could not be remedied—may be prevented. My Government is doing the utmost possible in order to induce Russia and France to postpone further military preparations, provided that Austria declares herself satisfied with the occupation of Belgrade and the neighbouring Serbian territory as a pledge for a satisfactory settlement of her demands. . . .

The Kaiser replied, 31st July :

Your proposals coincide with my orders and with the communication which I have this evening received from Vienna and which I have passed on to London. I have just heard from the Chancellor that intelligence has just reached him that Nicholas this evening has ordered the mobilisation of his entire army and fleet.

King George answered, 1st August :

I have sent an urgent telegram to Nicholas in which I have assured him of my readiness to do everything in my power to further the resumption of negotiations between the Powers concerned.

The " international of monarchs " as these crowned heads have been called, was not working badly, but the military programme of the General Staff did not admit of further delay. As Russian mobilisation required about three weeks for completion, and German mobilisation only two weeks, the German General Staff felt that it could not afford to lose this advantage of a week. It therefore pressed the German government to answer the Russian initiation of mobilisation not with counter-mobilisation but with war. The Tsar's Government had felt that Russian mobilisation was necessitated by the Austrian declaration of war upon Serbia (which was delivered on 28th July). The responsibility would seem accordingly to be divided between Austria, Russia, and Germany. King George's part in the tragedy at any rate is perfectly clear ; his efforts were solely directed to endeavouring to avert it, and nothing that he did could conceivably be said to have worked in another direction.

CHAPTER XI

THE WAR

A CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCH, like a diplomatist, does not appear very prominently during war, because it is a technical matter. The experts, to a large extent, take charge. This, in fact, took place during the last war even where the monarch was not limited, as he was in England, by a strictly constitutional system. The Kaiser William II., who, poor man, had talked so grandiloquently about his sword and shining armour without in the least realising what this involved, was pushed aside by the high military men in the War. Bülow, in his *Memoirs*, pictures the Kaiser in the War as a lonely figure, left for hours in a fixed place behind the fighting line, helplessly waiting to be told what was happening. King George could not incur this ignominy, for he had never professed to be a " War Lord " although, having been a serving sailor, he could talk with admirals and generals as man to man. His political work, naturally, went on and had to be discharged, but there was only one ministerial crisis during the War period, in 1916, when Mr Lloyd George displaced Mr Asquith. Most of the King's time was spent in visits to the troops in France or England, to the fleet ; to hospitals and munition works ; and in receiving and entertaining important people who came to London from all the allied countries and from neutral countries as well. The tactful reception of neutrals was particularly useful to Great Britain in the circumstances of the World War.

The first journey to the troops in France was made at the end of November and the beginning of December 1914, when the King stayed for a week at Field-Marshal French's headquarters. The days were naturally crowded with visiting various units, conferences with generals, inspecting the military lines, visiting wounded. The King also was present at some artillery attacks. *The Times* has described this journey in words that readers will instinctively recognise as just :

> From beginning to end the visit offered a happy illustration of His Majesty's character, earnest in the performance of every duty, disliking unnecessary ceremony and parade, self-denying, business-like, orderly, punctual, and at the same time full of geniality and consideration. These latter qualities especially shone during the King's constant visits to hospitals both abroad and at home.

Journeys to the fleet and to the military forces naturally took place frequently. On one occasion, 28th October 1915, when reviewing troops in

France, the King had an accident. His horse reared, slipped, and fell with him underneath. The accident was serious, and he had to be brought home in a hospital train. *The Times* described an episode characteristic of the man:

> On his way home in the hospital train His Majesty, though lying helpless in bed, endeavoured to invest with the Victoria Cross a lance-sergeant of the Coldstream Guards who had won his decoration three weeks before. The man knelt by the King's bed and bent over His Majesty, who tried, but found himself too weak without assistance, to pin the ribbon to the thick khaki uniform.

The same writer says, with regard to the visits to France and the front lines, which continued to the end of the War: "The King had done untold good to the army by not allowing himself to be dissuaded from taking the risks of the battlefield." In July 1917 Queen Mary accompanied the King to France and Belgium and met the King and Queen of the Belgians and the President of the French Republic and Madame Poincaré.

The depressing year 1917—the year of the prolonged struggle at Passchendaele, of the Bolshevik Revolution and the mutinies in the French army—was lightened only by the advent of the United States on the *Entente* side; though it was not until 1918 that the American troops came over in any great numbers. A message of welcome issued by the King in April 1918 to American troops landing in England is notable both for its restraint and friendliness:

> Soldiers of the United States, the people of the British Isles welcome you on your way to take your stand beside the armies of many nations now fighting in the Old World the great battle for human freedom.
>
> The Allies will gain new heart and spirit in your company. I wish I could shake the hand of each one of you and bid you God-speed on your mission.

The Royal Household—never very elaborate as Royal households are reckoned—was reduced in the War to extreme simplicity; any savings made in this way were devoted to charities and public needs; and over and above all this the King made to the Exchequer a gift of £100,000 which was subsequently disclosed to have come from his private fortune.

The United States ambassador, Walter Hines Page (like all United States ambassadors in the nineteenth century) came to know the reigning sovereign rather well. They first met in the summer of 1913 when Page had just taken up his appointment in London. He was driven with the American Embassy Staff in "four or five" Royal coaches to Buckingham Palace. There he was introduced to the King who received him standing in one of the drawing-rooms. Page spoke a few sentences. The King replied with a word of welcome, "and immediately proceeded to express his surprise that a grand and rich country like the United States had not provided a residence for its ambassadors. '*It is not fair to an ambassador*,' said he: and he spoke most earnestly."

Page greatly liked the paraphernalia of royalty. The grand receptions,

the uniforms, orders, ladies sparkling with diamonds, amused him. " For my part," he wrote, " I like it—here. . . . The King is a fine man with a big bass voice, and he talks very well and is most agreeable. . . . You've no idea how much time and money they spend on shooting."

In the War all the pageantry of royalty was discarded. When peace broke down on 3rd August 1914, Page had an interview with the King who (the ambassador wrote) " declaimed at me for half an hour and threw up his hands and said, ' My God, Mr Page, what else could we do ? ' " They continued to meet from time to time during the War.

> After all formalities had been exchanged, the King would frequently draw the ambassador aside ; the two would retire to the smoking-room and there, over their cigars, discuss a variety of matters—submarines, international politics, the Irish question, and the like. His Majesty was not averse even to bringing up the advantages of the democratic and the monarchical system. The King and the ambassador would chat, as Page himself would say, like " two human beings ; " King George is an emphatic and vivacious talker, fond of emphasising his remarks by pounding the table ; he has the liveliest sense of humour, and enjoys nothing quite so much as a good story.[1]

Curiously most Englishmen, according to Page anyhow, in the early period of the War (they changed their mind later) did not desire American participation. King George, however, did not share this opinion. When he and Page talked together after the sinking of the *Lusitania*, King George said that Germany was obviously trying to drive the United States into war and that, " for his part, he would welcome us heartily." After the United States entered the War in 1917 the King told a story (which, as a courteous gentleman, he would never have dreamed of telling before) to Page, who, as was his custom, subsequently wrote it down.

> I arrived (at Windsor) during the middle of the afternoon, writes Page, and he (the King) sent for me to talk with him in his office.
>
> " I've a good story on you," said he. " You Americans have a queer use of the word *some*, to express mere bigness or emphasis. We are taking that use of the word from you over here. Well, an American and an Englishman were riding in the same railway compartment. The American read his paper diligently—all the details of a big battle. When he got done, he put the paper down and said : ' Some fight.' ' And some don't,' said the Englishman." And the King roared. " A good one on you."
>
> " The trouble with that joke, sir," I ventured to reply, " is that it's out of date." [1]

A little earlier than this, the King had sent for Page to come to Buckingham Palace, soon after the United States had joined the Allies. Page writes :

> He went over the whole course of events, and asked me many questions. After I had risen and said good-bye and was about to bow myself out of the door, he ran

[1] B. J. Hendrick, *The Life and Letters of Walter H. Page* (1924), part ii. p. 236–37.

toward me and waving his hand cried out: "Ah—ah! we knew where *you* stood all the time!"

King George, as the above scene shows, was a much more impulsive man than people thought. He spoke with great animation, and was fond of expounding his ideas briefly but emphatically; and he had ideas on many subjects, on politics, personalities, shooting, racehorses, law, monarchy, foreign affairs. His animated, emphatic, frank conversation was an index of the simple, straightforward nature of the man. His way of living was simple too; during the War it was simple to a degree. To a friend in the United States Page wrote (3rd May 1917);

> Here in bountiful England we are living on rations. I spent a night with the King a fortnight ago, and he gave us only so much bread, one egg apiece—and lemonade.

Page had flung his whole passionate soul into the service of England and the United States and wore himself out at his embassy during the War. By the time it was over he was a sick man. He spent one night at Windsor to say good-bye to King George and then left London for Southampton. Cabinet ministers went to Waterloo Station to see him off. "They all stood, with uncovered heads, as the train slowly pulled out of the station, and caught their final glimpse of Page as he smiled at them and faintly waved his hand." His memorial is now in Westminster Abbey.

When the long contest was over and fighting ended with the Armistice of 11th November 1918, the King issued three historic messages to the fighting forces and to his people, messages which may fittingly conclude this survey of the war period of his reign:

To the Navy his message went:

> Ever since that fateful fourth of August 1914, I have remained steadfast in my confidence that, whether fortune frowned or smiled, the Royal Navy would once more prove the sure shield of the British Empire in the hour of trial.
>
> Never in its history has the Royal Navy, with God's help, done greater things for us, nor better sustained its old glories and the chivalry of the seas.
>
> With full and grateful hearts the peoples of the British Empire salute the White, the Red, and the Blue Ensigns, and those who have given their lives for the Flag.
>
> I am proud to have served in the Navy, I am prouder still to be its Head on this memorable day.

The King's Address to "all ranks of the Army of the British Empire, Home, Dominion, Colonial, and Indian Troops," contained the following triumphant passage:

> Soldiers of the British Empire! In France and in Belgium the prowess of your arms, as great in retreat as in victory, has won the admiration alike of friend and foe, and has now by a happy historic fate enabled you to conclude the campaign by capturing Mons, where your predecessors of 1914 shed the first British blood. Between that date and then you have traversed a long and weary road; defeat has more than

once stared you in the face ; your ranks have been thinned again and again by wounds, sickness, and death ; but your faith has never faltered, your courage has never failed, your hearts have never known defeat.

In congratulating the Air Force he declared that :

Our aircraft have been ever in the forefront of the battle ; pilots and observers have constantly maintained the offensive throughout the ever-changing fortunes of the day, and in the war zones our gallant dead have lain always beyond the enemies' lines or far out to sea.

The birth of the Royal Air Force with its wonderful expansion and development, will ever remain one of the most remarkable achievements of the Great War.[1]

[1] Reprinted from *The Times* 21st January 1936.

CHAPTER XII

THE POST-WAR PERIOD

NOBODY COULD EXPECT the British social and political system to be the same after the great strain and upheaval of the World War. Some of the inevitable or necessary developments had been registered in legislation even before the War was over. The Representation of the People Act, 1918, established universal suffrage (for women as well as men) in the United Kingdom. In the following year women were given the right to sit in the House of Commons, and Viscountess Astor was elected for Plymouth. A notable advance was made in the education system by the Fisher Act, which established some Continuation Schools for young workers and led, though not immediately or in every county, to the extension of the school age. Important bills for social betterment were passed after the War, improving the system of National Health Insurance, Unemployment Insurance, Old Age Pensions, hours and other working conditions of miners. The expenses of Government, enormously swollen by the necessities of the War, remained ruinously large in time of peace, until they were reduced and compressed, without any apparent loss of Government's efficiency, by the recommendations of the Geddes Committee (1921). Industry, thrown out of its usual channels by the War and " bloated " by war orders, was adjusted only with great difficulty to conditions of peace. There was great unrest among the workers, alike on the part of those who came out of the army to take up civil work and those who were already engaged in industry. A series of wasteful and sometimes violent strikes occurred in most of the big industries, particularly in the railways and mines. There was a great railway strike in 1917. The King and Queen were caught by this at Balmoral. They at once set out for London and travelled there by car in one day, 500 miles. In 1921 there was a great coal strike. Besides these, there were hundreds of other strikes between 1921 and 1923. The wasteful outbreaks of industrial war cost Great Britain much of her foreign trade, diminished the spending power of the people, and —after the brief post-war " boom " was over—created unemployment and thereafter went on increasing it. In 1925 trade recovered a little and the number of unemployed men sank below a million : but in 1926 the workers precipitated a " General Strike," which, in so far as it was at all *general*, only lasted for about a week, but which helped to increase the numbers of unemployed until they seemed permanently fixed at over two million. It was only in the last year of George V.'s reign that thenumber of unemployed sank below the two million figure.

King George and Queen Mary, and also their eldest son, continuously showed deep interest in the subject of industrial welfare. No monarchs or princes were ever so assiduous in visiting the great centres of industry. In the last years of the King's reign, the Prince of Wales put himself at the head of the movement for helping the unemployed workers and inaugurated and sustained a magnificent nation-wide effort for providing clubs, allotments, and other means of alleviating their condition.

Politics were also in a somewhat troubled state, though not nearly so troubled as industry. During the War the system of party politics had been practically suspended. From 1916 to 1918 there was a Coalition Government with Mr Lloyd George as Prime Minister. Owing to the extra pressure of work caused by the War, the Cabinet was divided into two. One was called the War Cabinet, and composed only of the Prime Minister and four other Ministers, later increased to five. None of the members of the War Cabinet, except the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr Bonar Law), had any Department of State to administer, but each was free from administrative duties and was to give his undivided attention to the War and the general needs of the country. For the internal affairs of the country there was a Home Cabinet, comprising all the Ministers of Departments of State, meeting usually under the chairmanship of the Home Secretary.

This new system of Cabinet Government was a great success. The War Cabinet became the brain of the British Government. When the Prime Ministers for the Dominions visited England they sat in the War Cabinet, which thereupon, as long as they were present, became the Imperial War Cabinet. When peace came, the Government meant to continue the Imperial Cabinet, but this plan was not carried into effect. The War Cabinet itself disappeared soon after the War, and the Home Cabinet too. Government reverted to the old Cabinet system, consisting of a Prime Minister and Ministers of Departments. The pre-War system of politics did not revive just all at once. Coalition Government persisted for a time. It made the Peace Treaties of 1919, but the majority of the Conservative party became dissatisfied with the leadership of the Prime Minister, Mr Lloyd George, who was a Liberal, indeed a Radical. In 1920, although Mr A. J. Balfour and a few other prominent Conservatives advised that Coalition Government should continue, the Conservative party, at a celebrated meeting at the Carlton Club, decided to withdraw its support. Mr Lloyd George thereupon resigned. Coalition Government was at an end (October 1922).

The selection of a new Prime Minister was practically determined for the King by the custom of the constitution. Mr Bonar Law had been leader of the Conservative party since 1909. During the War he had been Chancellor of the Exchequer and had displayed the utmost energy and public spirit. The

King naturally entrusted him with the task of forming a new Government. Mr. Bonar Law's health, however, soon broke down. After 209 days as Prime Minister, he resigned, 20th May 1923. He died on 30th October 1923. The task before the King was not so simple as when the Coalition Government fell. The most prominent Conservatives were Mr A. J. Balfour (Earl of Balfour), Mr Austen Chamberlain, and Lord Curzon. This last statesman, who had been Viceroy of India before the War and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the Coalition Government after the War, was the most energetic of the trio, perhaps also the most ambitious. He confidently expected to be made Prime Minister, and had this happened the public would not have been surprised, and would (perhaps not over-enthusiastically) have approved. In fact, Lord Curzon believed that he was being offered the Prime Ministry. The extraordinary story is told by Mr Harold Nicolson.

Lord Curzon had gone down for Whitsuntide to Montacute, a magnificent house which he rented in Somerset.

> There was no telephone installed at Montacute and throughout that Whit Monday Lord Curzon remained in the country, a prey to excited impatience. Towards the evening, a policeman was observed approaching the front door upon a bicycle. A telegram was delivered to Lord Curzon. He opened it with trembling fingers. It contained a message from Lord Stamfordham, summoning him to London without delay. He regarded that message as equivalent to an offer of the Premiership.[1]

On Tuesday, 22nd May he travelled up to London and went to his house in Carlton House Terrace. After lunch, Lord Stamfordham was announced. With some embarrassment, Lord Stamfordham announced that the King had decided to send for Mr Baldwin. The King, after reflection, had come to the conclusion that, at this stage in the history of the world and of Great Britain, the Prime Minister should be in the House of Commons. He offered the post to Mr Stanley Baldwin, who had been comparatively unknown in the House of Commons until the War.

Mr Baldwin was an industrialist whose heart was much more in the country than in politics. A cultured, scholarly man, intensely fond of the English countryside, a reader of the Latin and English classics, he was in politics as a duty and in accordance with his ideals of an English gentleman. Although comparatively little known when he was appointed Prime Minister, he very quickly established himself in the public estimation. People felt that the King had made a good choice and had chosen someone who, like himself, had very characteristic English qualities.

Though undoubtedly a success in this, his first, Prime Ministry, Mr Baldwin did not remain very long in office. In December 1923 he " went to the country " on a general election programme which included a proposed tariff on imports.

[1] H. Nicolson, *Curzon, the Last Phase* (1934), p. 354.

The electors, not yet scared by economic depression, refused to give his party a majority. Three parties were returned in nearly equal strength to the House of Commons: Conservative, Liberal, and Labour. Of these, the Labour party was the largest, though not by a big margin. The King asked their leader, Mr J. R. MacDonald, to become Prime Minister. Thus there came into being the first Labour Government, with outspoken Socialist views. It was a "Minority Government," as, if the Conservative and Liberal parties chose to combine on any vote, they would greatly outnumber the Government's supporters. Thus the Government could not, even if it had wished to do so, attempt any policy that was socially—from the Conservative or Liberal point of view—dangerous. The country received the advent of a Socialist Government with its accustomed tranquillity and tolerance. The Labour Ministers attended Court and found the King, as he invariably was, approachable, agreeable, helpful. Administration went on much as it had done under previous Governments. There was no marked exit of capital from Great Britain, no "flight from sterling." The Government, active in League of Nations affairs, concluded in 1924 with the other states, members of the League, the Protocol of Geneva, for defining aggressions and bringing all the force of the League into action against them, but the following Government refused to ratify this. The Labour Government fell in October 1924 through the publication, by the *Daily Mail*, of the "Zinoviev Letter," which seemed to show that the Russian Government was trying to stir up social and labour trouble in England. Mr J. R. MacDonald, the Prime Minister, though he had lost the confidence of the House of Commons, did not at once resign office, but asked the King for power to dissolve Parliament. The King agreed and a general election was held. The Conservatives were returned with a large majority. Mr Baldwin became Prime Minister for the second time. This Prime Ministry was marked by a notable event in foreign affairs, the negotiation of the Treaty of Locarno between Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Belgium on 16th October 1925.

By this treaty the British, German, French, Italian, and Belgian Governments guaranteed the frontier between France and Germany, and between Belgium and Germany. Thus the *status quo* was finally accepted in a region which had been the scene of many wars since the break-up of the Roman Empire in A.D. 476. It was expected that this treaty would inspire sufficient confidence for the Powers to be able to hold a successful conference for reduction of armaments. The Treaty of Locarno was the work of three statesmen—Austen Chamberlain, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; Gustav Stresemann, Foreign Minister of Germany; Aristide Briand, Foreign Minister of France. These three Ministers met in London and celebrated the reconciliation of formerly enemy Powers. The King recognised Austen Chamberlain's services by making him a Knight of the Garter.

In home affairs, the outstanding event was the General Strike in 1926. During the World War, Great Britain had, naturally, ceased to be a free market for gold. The " Gold Standard," that is, the obligation of the Bank of England to sell gold for export at a fixed price, had not been restored. By 1926, however, the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr W. S. Churchill) and his advisers believed that the economic condition of Great Britain and the rest of Europe had recovered sufficiently for the Bank of England to resume payment in gold, as the only means of maintaining the pound sterling at a constant value. Unfortunately, the pre-War standard or " parity " was restored and the pound sterling was given its old equal value in gold. As gold was more valuable in 1926 than it was in 1913, the pound was now " overvalued " : it could command more gold (and therefore more commodities) after the restoration of the gold standard in 1926 than before the restoration in 1925. Thus wages or salaries or interest paid in pounds sterling increased in value. All this increased the cost of producing goods in Great Britain and therefore made it more difficult to sell them abroad. Accordingly, the owners of export industries, particularly in coal-mining, claimed to reduce wages in order to reduce the cost of production with a view to meeting competition in the foreign markets. The miners refused to accept the proposed reductions of wages. The various Trade Unions and the works in the other large-scale industries (including railways) for the most part sided with the miners. Thus a " General Strike " occurred in the spring of 1926.

This is one of the most significant events in the reign, indeed one of the most significant events in British history. The coal-miners' strike lasted from five to six months, but the General Strike only for about one week. The public rallied to the defence of itself and of the Government, and the Trade Union leaders and many of the strikers themselves revolted from the illegality of a " General Strike " which was an effort to starve out the whole community. The history of the strike proved the toughness, cohesion, and solidarity of British society.

> The King shared to the full the refusal of his people to take this dark event tragically, and so soon as it was over, exercised the full weight of his authority in the direction of securing the pacification of minds and tempers. In a message to the nation on 12th May, he appealed for the elimination of bitterness, recalled how steady and how orderly the country had remained under so severe a trial, and argued that the task of making good the mischief done should be undertaken by a united people. The message was taken to heart and, though no efforts seemed to avert all the consequences of deepening industrial depression during subsequent years, neither King nor people were again subjected to the " extreme anxiety " of organised industrial strife.[1]

Besides the Treaty of Locarno in foreign affairs and the General Strike in English home affairs, there was an historic declaration of the Imperial Conference

[1] *The Times*, 21st January 1936.

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of 1926 in British Commonwealth affairs. Originally called the Colonial Conference when it began in 1887, this assembly of Dominion powers with the British Government had met every three or four years to discuss matters of common "Imperial" or "Commonwealth" interest. Since the Dominions and India had shared so much of the British military effort in the World War, and had each, for itself, signed the Treaty of Peace of Versailles of 28th June 1919, there had been some ambiguity in the constitutional position of the Dominions. General Smuts had said, "The British Empire came to an end on 28th June 1919," meaning the old-style Empire regulated in the last resort from Downing Street and Whitehall. A new conception, that of the British Commonwealth of Nations (a title apparently invented by General Smuts), had come into existence. The Imperial Conference of 1926 discussed this new form of Empire. There was the usual difficulty of defining concretely the somewhat vague principles of the British Constitution. Then Lord Balfour (Mr A. J. Balfour), who was Lord President of the Council in the Baldwin Government, drafted a paragraph on half a sheet of notepaper:

> Great Britain and the Dominions . . . are autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, by no means subordinate to one another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the British Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

This Declaration of 1926 is the charter of the British Commonwealth of Nations, and admirably expressed both the spirit and the law of the Empire. It was put into more legal language and its consequential provisions were defined in the Statute of Westminster of 1931.

In November 1928 the King suffered from a chill which produced an abscess in the lung, and for weeks his life hung by a thread. Contrary to the usual custom of royalty, full details and almost daily bulletins were supplied to the public about the progress of the King's illness. The public responded to this confidence with touching sympathy universally expressed. A general community of sentiment and domestic affection was discovered to exist between the Royal Family and the rest of the people. The gradual recovery of the King's health, progressively chronicled by the medical bulletins, was hailed with universal joy. With the King's convalescence it was realised that he held a unique position in British life, as if at last the old royal myth of the "father of the people" had achieved reality in this simple-hearted gentleman who had never put on any airs, never claimed any of the mystical attributes of Majesty.

For the next—and last—seven years of his reign the King had a position which was unique in the history of British sovereigns. There were some—before the days of Constitutional Monarchy—who had wielded more definite

power: but there was none who had greater influence, openly recognised and welcomed. As politics were in a somewhat disturbed condition between 1929 and 1936, the King's experience and judgment were all the more valuable to the country.

In 1929 a General Election of the House of Commons took place, and once more, as in 1924, no party had a clear majority over all the rest, but the Labour Party was the largest party (Labour 287, Conservative 261, Liberal 59, others 8). The King naturally offered the post of Prime Minister to Mr J. R. MacDonald, and so there came into existence another "Minority Government," dependent on the goodwill or at least the tolerance of both or one of the other parties.

The second Labour Government was not a success, for its entry into office coincided with the beginning of the great World Economic Depression and the increasing European unrest. Perhaps no other government could have done any better.

By September 1931 the economic and financial condition of the country was grave. The steady increase of unemployed workers (now far above the two million figure); the increasing debt, incurred for the payment of unemployment relief which the Government financed by borrowing; finally unrest in the Navy and something like a mutiny at Invergordon—precipitated an event, the like of which had never been before, a "flight from the pound sterling." This withdrawal of funds from England was done not so much by Englishmen but by foreigners who had deposited funds with English banks. These foreigners —banks or individuals—now demanded the return of their money in foreign currency or in gold: and England being still "on the gold standard" there was a rapid drain on the gold reserves of the country. For the Bank of England was legally bound to sell (that is to exchange) gold, but only in gold bars of 400 ounces, at a maximum price of £3 17s. 10½d. an ounce. After hundreds of millions had gone out of the country and the end of the gold reserves of the Bank was in sight, the Government closed the market in gold and forbade the Bank to meet its obligations abroad in gold. The relief to the financial system of the country was immediate. The pound sterling, measured in foreign currencies, fell about 35 per cent. in value, and therefore English goods, sold at sterling prices, cost less abroad than before the suspension of the Gold Standard. This favoured the export trade, which began to revive from that moment.

Before this happened, the Labour Government had not exactly fallen, but had broken up and had been transformed. Mr MacDonald had come to the conclusion that a decisive halt must be made to the excessive expenditure and borrowing on account of unemployment relief. Accordingly, he proposed certain economies, not only in regard to unemployment relief but also in regard to all Government expenditure on salaries. Most of his colleagues, of whom

the chief was Arthur Henderson, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, refused to agree to these proposals. Mr MacDonald saw his Cabinet breaking up and he decided to resign. It is at this point that the position and personality of the King are seen as steadying factors in British politics. The full story is not, perhaps never will be, known. The King urged Mr MacDonald to remain in office and promised him confidence and support. Probably, too, he offered to use his influence with other public men, leaders in the Conservative and Liberal parties, to bring about co-operation with Mr MacDonald, a "nation-wide front" to meet the impending financial crisis. Mr MacDonald accepted the King's appeal and advice, remained in office, took the leaders of the other parties into consultation, and formed the "National Government." Most of his own party went into Opposition, but with the small number of Labour ministers who stayed with him (Philip Snowden and J. H. Thomas), and the Conservatives under Mr Baldwin and the Liberals under Sir Herbert Samuel who joined him, he was able to command a substantial majority. This majority was enormously increased at the General Election which followed on 27th October (1931). The MacDonald–Baldwin Government was one of the strongest in English history.[1] The economies of the Government, combined with a budget which rigorously equated taxation with expenditure, soon restored the financial condition of the country. The capital that had fled from the pound sterling began to return. Foreign countries outside the "gold bloc" found sterling to be the most useful international money. Trade increased among the states of the "sterling bloc"—Great Britain, the British Dominions, the Scandinavian countries, the Argentine. In spite of the devaluation of the pound sterling in terms of foreign gold currencies, the buying power of the pound inside the United Kingdom remained stable; that is, British internal prices did not rise. Traders recovered confidence; unemployment decreased. At the time of the economic crisis of autumn 1931, the National Government had imposed an emergency tariff to prevent "abnormal imports." This gradually became a protective tariff in support of British domestic manufactures, a high measure of protection if the devaluation of the pound (about 35 per cent. of its previous value) be added to the legal 33 per cent. tariff on imports. A World Economic Conference held at London in 1933 and opened by the King failed to achieve any amelioration of the universal economic nationalism.

With the passing of the economic depression, the Government and people felt that they could relax with national rejoicing over the jubilee of their King's reign. Everywhere, throughout the British Commonwealth of Nations, there was the utmost enthusiasm, except in Ireland, and even there it was certainly

[1] In 1935, Mr MacDonald, Prime Minister, changed places with Mr Baldwin, Lord President of the Council.

not the man but the office which was criticised. Ireland had been greatly disturbed since, at the outbreak of the World War, the operation of the Home Rule Bill was suspended. In 1916 there was a rebellion in Dublin, quickly suppressed. When the World War was over, the trouble continued in Ireland: shootings, murderings, a partial breakdown of law, order, administration. In 1922 the trouble ended—for a time anyhow—with the "Anglo-Irish Treaty," by which "Southern Ireland" became the Irish Free State with all the powers of a Dominion. "Ulster" became Northern Ireland with a Government and Parliament of its own, but still within the United Kingdom, and sending representatives to the House of Commons in London. The Irish Free State prospered amid apparent contentment within the British Commonwealth of Nations, so long as Mr Cosgrave was head of the Irish Free State Government. In 1932 Mr Cosgrave lost his majority and Mr de Valera became President of the Council (Prime Minister) with a majority in the legislature. Mr de Valera used this majority to pass legislation through the Free State legislature abolishing the oath of allegiance to the King which, under the Treaty of 1922, all members of the legislature had to take. About the same time the de Valera Government ceased remitting to the British Treasury the annuities collected for payment of the sums expended by the British Government in carrying out the Irish Land Purchase Act of 1903. The British Government replied by imposing duties on Irish produce imported into the United Kingdom. Thus from June 1932 there was a wearisome constitutional controversy and a miserable economic dispute between the Government of the United Kingdom and the Government of the Irish Free State. But for this exception, the Jubilee Celebrations were absolutely unclouded.

The radio had made the King's living voice familiar to the people. In 1932 and subsequent years he delivered a regular Christmas broadcast. In the broadcast of 1934 he said towards the end:

> May I add very simply and sincerely that, if I may be regarded as in some true sense the head of this great and widespread family, sharing its life and sustained by its affection, this will be a full reward for the long and sometimes anxious labours of my reign of well-nigh five-and-twenty years?

It was characteristic of the man to speak of himself in this modest way as "in some sense" head of the widespread British family. His voice and expression were like himself, simple, sincere, homely. There was not the slightest trace of affectation or self-consciousness. He talked over the radio as if he were talking among his family and friends at home, with his habitual emphatic and vivacious tone, always genuinely interested in what he was saying. His reference in the 1934 Christmas broadcast to his reign of "well-nigh twenty-five years" was an indication of what was coming.

Yet the Silver Jubilee, when it came, surprised him, as indeed it surprised everyone else. There were millions of people alive who remembered Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee of 1897, a grand and stately and indeed joyful affair. But the Jubilee of King George V. in 1935 had a character all its own: something which might be expressed by the word *intimate*. The interest of the people was perfectly genuine; the enthusiasm spontaneous; and the pleasure, universally felt, was pleasure of sharing in an intimate family celebration; the pleasure of joining in expression of real affection. The King and Queen had clearly not expected such a widespread, spontaneous ovation; probably they had not thought much about it in advance at all. When 6th May 1935 came, and the celebrations began with a procession and a service in St Paul's in perfect weather, the massed crowds in London, and the crowds all over the British Isles and Empire who listened to the broadcast, felt for once, at any rate, in complete unity: united by common joy in this unique family event. The weather continued to be splendid throughout May, June, and July.

The rest of the world seemed to be influenced by the cheerfulness and harmony of the British peoples, and there was a respite from political alarms and incursions. The Jubilee celebrations continued throughout these months, completed by four drives which the King and Queen made through London—north, south, east, west—not ceremonial processions, but simple tours of visitation from end to end of the metropolis. King George stood the strain of the Jubilee celebrations without injury to his health.

All who heard, some six months later, his fifth Christmas broadcast, will remember the firm voice, the emphatic accents, the kindly, friendly tone that came over the air. The King referred to the Jubilee and the pleasure which the people's manifestations had given to himself and to the Queen whom he called in ordinary language, unknown hitherto in Royal pronouncements, "My wife."

This was his last message to the people, for his heart had been weakened by previous illness and prolonged strain. He died peacefully, just short of seventy-one years of age, at Sandringham on 20th January 1936.

In the last quarter of a century the reigning King, as a constitutional monarch, had been a conspicuous success. Besides the political experience and wisdom which he undoubtedly possessed, he had brought monarchy and the Royal Family more into the minds and hearts of the people than ever before, even in the reign of Queen Victoria. For this happy result, Queen Mary must also be given much of the credit. She was as familiar to the people as the King, and as approachable. She married the King (Prince George as he then was) in 1893. At that time Dr Randall Davidson, Bishop of Rochester (later Archbishop of Canterbury) had written: "I confess to feeling very hopeful indeed of her being a success in her great position. There is a quiet

energy and common sense about her which distinguish her." The Bishop's judgment proved to be amply warranted.

Amid all our thankfulness for the maintenance of England and the whole Commonwealth of Nations, firmly knit, rich, humane, respected throughout the world, we nevertheless cannot fail to see that these twenty-five years are a deeply tragic period of the world's history. It opens with the peoples of the world living in abounding prosperity, or at any rate with all the means of prosperity and also of a high intellectual culture; it moves into the World War, the great catastrophe of modern civilisation; and it passes into the post-War fifteen years of dislocated economy and puzzled, groping social policies: and the twenty-five years are concluded with the "great depression" still weighing upon England and the whole world, and with democratic principles, the basis of England's political life, almost everywhere challenged.

In all these years of crowded history, amid so much effort, achievement, good fortune, ill fortune, mistakes, recoveries, relapses, the pleasantest figure for historians to contemplate is the King. Outside the rancours of political parties; exempt from the secular prejudices of ancient and recent nationalism; immune from the impulses of personal ambition; unperplexed by competing schools of economics and society; he moves through the historic scenes, steadfast, friendly, moderate, wise—such, as we like to think, is the "typical Englishman."

CHAPTER XIII

THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH AND EDWARD VIII.

IT IS GENERALLY considered that the year 1919 begins a new era, the "post-War period." The real dividing line, however, the start of the new era, may prove to be 1936. The reign of George V., in spite of the great shock, that most terrible of political earthquakes, the World War, was a unity: the King, the statesmen, social and political habits, were the same after the War as before. There were, it is true, many new problems in the years 1919–36, but the statesmen, all of whom had come from the pre-War period, faced these problems, naturally, with their old habits and methods of thought. Relations with Germany, for instance, on the part of Great Britain and France would have taken a different course from what actually happened, if affairs had been directed by a young generation of statesmen. Economic matters, like unemployment and international trade, were handled, pre-eminently, in a "pre-War" mentality; unemployment being treated largely by doles, and international trade by the mutually incompatible methods of subsidies and tariffs. This presence of pre-War habits of thought, and of pre-War policies, was inevitable, because so many of the young adult population, who would otherwise have begun to direct politics soon after 1919, were killed or disabled in the War. All the Great Powers, except the United States, suffered from the loss of a great part of a generation.

By 1936 this difficulty was to some extent passing away. The part of the generation lost in the War were not replaced, but some of those who survived were now coming forward to take the places of older statesmen who were due, some of them overdue, to retire. In all the Great Powers, departments of state were beginning to be administered by men who had started their active, adult career during the War. King Edward VIII. himself belonged to this class, being forty-one years old when he succeeded to the throne on 20th January 1936.

King Edward was born on 23rd June 1894 at White Lodge, Richmond Park. He was educated in the first instance privately, and when just short of thirteen, was sent to the Royal Naval College, Osborne. After the regular course of instruction there he passed on, as all senior cadets did, to the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth. Passing out of the college, he went to sea in H.M.S. *Hindustan*. So far, his training had been that of a professional sailor, like his father, and he apparently looked forward to the Navy for his career. Though

he was taken away from the Navy and sent up to Oxford at the age of eighteen, and though he entered into the life of Oxford with all the zest of an active undergraduate, he is said to have cherished a desire to go back to sea at the end of his Oxford period.

The two years, 1912–14, spent at Oxford were unique in the history of heirs to the throne, for he lived practically the life of any undergraduate of comfortable means and wholesome, moderate tastes. It is true that he brought a tutor of his own with him, and that he did not enter for the University examinations; but this, if not the way of the ordinary undergraduate now, was quite common in Oxford a few generations previously. In other respects, the Prince's life followed the usual cheerful routine. He resided in College throughout the University terms; he attended lectures for the Modern History School in Magdalen and the other colleges, wearing a commoner's gown; he took essays to the College tutors. In the winter terms he played Association football in the Magdalen 2nd XI. He played some polo on Port Meadow and hunted occasionally with the Bicester at Heythrop. In those days, young Oxford was not quite so much occupied with questionings and criticisms as it is now; the undergraduates took life at the University as they found it, and were absorbed in their reading, their games, their mutual companionship and intercourse. It was a genuinely happy, carefree life, moderately (in some cases, immensely) industrious, without worry about the condition of the world or the future of society. The Prince shared this happy, wholesome young man's life in a " keen " College—a life of studies, outdoor games, discussion societies, conversation, boating, entertaining—and was looking forward to a third year when the War cut across his life as it did across that of all the other youth in the land.

On 7th August, he was gazetted to the Grenadier Guards, and joined his battalion on the 11th, only to be bitterly disappointed when, on its being ordered to France five weeks later, Lord Kitchener declined to let him go with it. When the Prince asked what it mattered if he were to be shot, since he had four brothers, Lord Kitchener replied that he doubted whether on that ground he would be right in restraining him from going, but that he could not face the risk of his being taken prisoner before the line of the front was stabilised. Three months later, however, the Prince got his way, having in the interval initiated the great national fund for the men of the Services, which brought in a quarter of a million in the first twenty-four hours, and eventually a sum which easily eclipsed all previous records.

On 9th November, he went out to General Headquarters as aide-de-camp to Lord French, and soon after insisted on joining his battalion in the trenches. Then and on other voluntary expeditions to the front, he risked his life with the rest, and on one occasion in particular, narrowly escaped death when his car was hit by a shell and his chauffeur killed only a few minutes after he had left it.[1]

[1] *The Times*, 21st January 1936.

After service in Flanders and France until March 1916, the Prince was posted to the Mediterranean Force in Egypt. Then he went to the North Italian Front. In midsummer 1916 he returned to the British Expeditionary Force in France. "He received no special favours." He joined the army as a second lieutenant. He returned to England after the Armistice with the rank of captain.

The years 1919–36 were a period of hard, indeed unremitting work. The Prince had inherited or imbibed all his grandfather's love of travelling and all his father's love of sport. He made tours over the British Dominions and Colonies and to the United States. He bought land in Canada and farmed it. He discovered a talent for public speaking which must at times have proved a heavy burden to himself, for incessant calls were made upon him and he responded, sometimes in unmistakable exhaustion, to them all. He invariably rose to the occasion; and his public appearances and public speeches, numerous though they were, were received with the same eagerness and enthusiasm everywhere. Youth has perpetual charm, and the boyish countenance and enthusiasm of this vigorous young man won approval and received a warm welcome wherever he went. He became not only, as it was said, an ambassador of empire, but a friend among all the English-speaking peoples. The citizens of the United States seemed to take a genuine family interest in him, and "*Wales says*," became a favourite front-page headline in big journals as in small town newspapers from the Atlantic coast to the Pacific slope. An Englishman travelling casually in California or Oregon might, if he were known to have come from Oxford, be quite embarrassed with personal questions about the Prince; and he would be startled by the curious reports of such offhand answers as he might make, printed in the local press.

Besides travelling officially over the British Empire and undertaking onerous duties in England, varied with hunting, golfing, squash rackets, often at astonishingly high pressure, the Prince undertook a vast work of supreme and tragic importance, the helping of the great masses of unemployed workers in the years of the Great Depression of 1929–36. To the movement for establishing and carrying on "unemployed centres"—social clubs, workshops, allotments, physical training schools—he brought not only his name, prestige, and material support; he gave his personal service. In all the great industrial cities he became a familiar figure: a firmly-knit, quick-stepping young man, no longer debonair and cheerful, but now looking a little anxious; the brows a little furrowed, sometimes tired, but always keen, interested, practical, sympathetic. In one unemployed centre after another, he would move about among the men, simple, vigorous, encouraging, not too sentimental, not condescending, just genuinely direct and helpful, with something to say, if only a word or two, to everybody that he met.

The apparatus of royalty is interesting. Some conception of the scope of the Royal Household and of the officers who administer it can be gathered by a visit to Windsor Castle, or a walk in the precincts of St James's Palace, where are the houses of a number of the officers of the Household. For over two hundred years the expenses of the sovereigns have been borne on a Civil List, a fixed annual sum authorised by Parliament at the beginning of each reign. In return for the Civil List, each sovereign at the beginning of the reign renounces all pecuniary interest in the Crown Lands, the ancient Royal demesne which has progressively increased in value, and now surpasses many times the cost of the Civil List.

George V.'s Civil List, fixed in 1910, was £470,000 a year, made up as follows :

First Class—	
H.M. Privy Purse	£110,000
Second Class—	
Salaries of H.M. Household and retired allowances	125,800
Third Class—	
Expenses of H.M. Household	193,000
Fourth Class—	
Works	20,000
Fifth Class—	
Royal Bounty, alms, and special services	13,200
Sixth Class—	
Unappropriated	8,000
	£470,000

Edward VIII. was allotted a Civil List at the reduced figure of £410,000 because certain expenses (mainly repairs to palaces) were taken over by the Office of Works. This figure, however, was further reduced, so long as the King should remain unmarried, by the sum of £40,000 a year. Further, as Prince of Wales and Duke of Cornwall, the King had always received the income from the Duchy of Cornwall, about £114,000 a year. This income, he now, as King, determined to use instead of the item in the Civil List called Privy Purse ; that is, the Privy Purse expenses would be met out of the revenues of the Duchy of Cornwall ; consequently this item on the Civil List would be withdrawn. The resulting relief to the Civil List was £149,000, voted but not drawn, and therefore going back to the Treasury.

A survey of the history of the Crown since 1837 shows a remarkable consistency in its power and reputation. It is true that there was a dull period for a number of years after the death of the Prince Consort in 1861, when the Queen retired to private life, and when some politicians were talking, perhaps not very seriously, of the advantage of a republican constitution. Apart from

this interlude, however, the throne has since 1837 become ever more solidly based in the estimation and respect of the people, compared with its position under George IV. and William IV. Socially, the Crown has evolved with the evolution of the British people. As aristocracy adapted itself to middle-class ways in the nineteenth century, so did the Crown. The Court bulked less in public life, the Royal Family more. It is the domestic aspect of the Crown which is its most characteristic feature.

Though the monarch acts through receiving and giving advice rather than by command, his power and influence were, and have continued to be, great, though not obvious nor looming large in the Constitution. As soon as Queen Victoria had graduated through the tutelage of Lord Melbourne, she began to exercise her own will in the affairs of Government; her published correspondence proves that this exercise of her will was continuous, though no other action of hers equalled in importance her and Prince Albert's intervention in the "Trent Affair."[1] The *British Documents on the Origins of the War* contain the minutes made by King Edward in dispatches, which prove his interested supervision, though his comments usually amount to simple approval of the Government's policy. The same series prints minutes of King George V.; though not numerous, they reveal independent judgment.[2] In domestic politics, his advice is considered to have been decisive in the Cabinet crisis of 1931 and possibly on certain other occasions. Authority increased with age and experience, and King George's in the last ten years of his reign must have been weighty. The House of Windsor has managed to combine such authority with the tactful self-suppression as well as assertion which the position of a constitutional sovereign demands.

George V. once said to the United States ambassador, Page: "Knowing the difficulties of a constitutional monarch, I am thankful that I was not born an absolute one." As a matter of fact, the position of a constitutional monarch is probably much more difficult to fill adequately than that of an absolute crown.

History is a record of the life of humanity upon the face of the earth. Down until almost the other day, humanity's various units were so separated by distance from each other that the history of each unit could be treated by itself. To-day this is no longer possible, as the revolution in communications brings all the peoples into contact at every moment of the day or night. The British Empire, being no compact area, but spread about over the globe is peculiarly responsive to this revolution in communication, without which, indeed, it could scarcely avoid breaking up. The steamship, the cable, the wireless, the aeroplane, are the mechanical bonds of the Empire, supporting the spiritual bond which community of experience has engendered in the British peoples.

This British Empire, which is so lacking in uniformity as to defy definition,

[1] See above p. 430. [2] E.g. *British Documents on the Origins of the War*, vol. x. part i. p. 588.

falls into two categories, the Crown Colonies (sometimes called the " Dependent Empire "), and the Commonwealth of Nations or Dominions (sometimes called the " Independent Empire "). The Crown Colonies are at various stages of development: the West Indies have an old white society and civilisation; the colonies in the Pacific islands, though well advanced, are still in the developing stage; the West African and East African colonies have still much pioneer development in front of them. It is difficult to foresee when any of the Crown Colonies will be in a position to assume full powers of self-government, though the West Indies are nearer to this position, and already enjoy greater powers than any other.

The Dominions, which comprise with the United Kingdom and its Crown Colonies the Commonwealth of Nations, are defined in the celebrated Balfour Declaration as " autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate to one another." This equality of status is the rule all over the Empire and governs the relations between the United Kingdom and any Dominion as it does relations between the Dominions themselves. The sovereign is His Majesty the King in the United Kingdom, H.M. the King in Canada, in South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, the Irish Free State, Newfoundland, and, as a constitutional monarch, he accepts the advice of the responsible cabinet of ministers in each Dominion. This system offers no difficulty in domestic affairs, for each Dominion's domestic problems only concern itself. It might create difficulties in external affairs. If the advice tendered to the King in regard to the same matter of foreign policy differed in different Dominions and the United Kingdom, a situation would obviously arise in which the unity of the Commonwealth would be endangered, if not destroyed.

This possible disunity in foreign policy within the Commonwealth of Nations is one reason—among others—why the League of Nations is of high importance for the whole Empire. A correspondent addressed a question to *The Times*: If the League system were to be abandoned, where would the peoples of the British Commonwealth of Nations look for a foreign policy in which they could be united, as against the persistent pull of regional and other centrifugal forces ? [1] The League of Nations certainly stands for a principle—justice and peace between nation and nation—which is also the policy of the members of the British Commonwealth of Nations. General Smuts has said that the British Commonwealth is itself a League of Nations, as indeed it is. Meeting with each other and with delegates of other nations in the Council or Assembly of the League of Nations at Geneva, the statesmen of the British Commonwealth help to shape policy not only for themselves, but for all the world. These meetings, however, are by no means the only occasions of contact between the statesmen of the Commonwealth, who independently visit each other from time to time, generally,

[1] Sir A. Zimmern, *The Times*, 11th June 1936.

but not uniformly, in London. There is, too, the Imperial Conference, meeting every three years for consultation, and sometimes for the making of agreements. With the growing complexity of world affairs, it would seem advisable that the Commonwealth statesmen should meet together in council more frequently: annually would not be too often.

Among the Commonwealth statesmen are naturally included the leaders of Indian politics. India, though not yet a Dominion in the constitutional sense of the word, is on the way to becoming one. In 1876 Queen Victoria assumed the style and title of Empress of India. In effect this did not alter the constitutional relation of the crown to India, which is determined by two things: (1) by the advice of the Secretary of State for India, which itself is decided in the British Cabinet and is tendered to the Sovereign through the Prime Minister; and (2) by the group of treaties made between the Crown and the ruling Indian princes.

The whole of the area subject to these understandings—that is, "British India," for which the Secretary of State is directly responsible, and the Indian States in treaty relationship with the British Crown—is regarded as the Indian Dominion of the future. The provinces of British India will be endowed with the functions of self-governing states, and at the same time will be federated in a legislative union comparable with the Commonwealth of Australia. This Indian Federation will come into existence when at least fifty per cent. of the Indian States agree to join it.

The Government of India Act passed the Houses of Parliament and received the Royal Assent in 1935. Thus was legally enacted what must surely be one of the most remarkable political developments in the history of states. The Crown will be at the head of a federal Dominion comprising over three hundred million of people and scores of races, a vast country of ancient societies, religions, civilisations, rich in talent, energy, romance. And it will enrich the British Commonwealth of Nations and the world, harmonising East and West, showing that all races, creeds, civilisations can exist in mutual esteem and collaboration.

The United States press has a very fine foreign service, whose members send home full and informing despatches about European politics. In May 1936 the London correspondent of the *New York Times* wrote that this was "England's most beautiful month in all the year, and the coming week will be the most notable of all the four in it." The event which was to make—and did make—the coming week so notable was the sailing of the *Queen Mary*, the "prize product of British skill and artisanship" from Southampton for New York.

Yet, despite this magnificent achievement of the English at sea, the observant American writer felt that something had gone out of English life in the last year, the sense of security, strength, and unity. Just a year earlier, at the

celebration of the Jubilee of King George V. and Queen Mary, everything had been gratefulness for the past, joy in the present, confidence in the future.

> One returns here remembering last May, which brought the brilliant pageant of the late King George's jubilee—what it was like then. There was sunshine in England, the air was like champagne, the countryside was a welter of perfumed blossom and in London the parks were in all their glory.
>
> Beyond and above all that there was great joy throughout the land. The World War and its aftermath had faded to distant memories. The dark days of economic distress were brightening, and the bright sun of economic prosperity seemed just ahead. Never had the people of England felt so united, so secure, so powerful and confident as in the emotion of that week.
>
> London is just the same outwardly this week. Again there is the perfume of hawthorn and apple-blossom in the surrounding countryside. The parks are a vision of painted satin against a background of ancient grey and green. Two hundred thousand tulips have been set out, and they are all in full bloom. The bluebells are out in the woods, and Kew Gardens are one great azure carpet. Outwardly it is the same England.
>
> Yet something is changed. One senses it almost immediately and sets about seeking what it is. One realises presently that it is a matter of spirit. That conviction of strength and security that one noted last year is missing. It is so obvious after a while that nobody remembering last year could mistake it, and the reasons are equally plain.
>
> The sense of unity has gone with the good King who exemplified it, and has passed, leaving a new and untried ruler, though of great promise, in his place.

Certainly the passing of the good King George V. took something out of English life. The fundamental principle of the British constitution, however, is that the King never dies : *le roi est mort : vive le roi !* The new King, at his accession to the throne, had been, as Prince of Wales, familiar with the people, like his father. Indeed, being young, physically stronger and relatively little involved in the great routine of state duties, the Prince had been able to spend his active time in visiting every corner of the land, every unit of the Commonwealth of Nations. And, as he reminded the people in his first broadcast when King, he was " the same man " they had known as Prince. This fact, this statement, was sufficient warranty for the expectation of the British people that the foundation of their political and social structure was secure.

CHAPTER XIV

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF HISTORY

FROM THE ACCESSION of Queen Victoria to the accession of Edward VIII. is a period just short of a century. One hundred years is not a large portion of history; for organised, fairly civilised communities have existed, from the time of the earliest Egyptian Empire, for almost six thousand years.

Nevertheless, these last hundred years form a very notable century among the sixty or more centuries of civilised society. Whatever the future fate of mankind, the period covered by the three reigns of Victoria, Edward VII., George V., will be regarded as notable. They left a rich, if somewhat burdensome and disquieting heritage, to Edward VIII. and his contemporaries.

The most consoling feature, to an observer, of the Victorian, Edwardian, and Georgian Ages as well as of the present troubled period, is the stability of the British constitution. All observers have the conviction that it is stable in spite (if they happen to know it) of the assertion, perhaps even because of the assertion, of a French critic; *La Constitution britannique, elle n'existe pas.* There is no written British constitution, it is not to be found in any document It is inscribed only, and that rather vaguely, yet indelibly, in the hearts and minds of British men and women. It is contained, less indefinitely yet without sharp outline, in the tradition of British politics. And it is enshrined, somehow, in Windsor Castle, the Houses of Parliament, Buckingham Palace, Whitehall. Being unwritten, but known in the hearts and minds of just men and women, it goes on like the Common Law, ever adapting itself to the changing needs of society, conforming to the eternal law of life.

Bagehot, in a famous chapter on the Crown in *The English Constitution*, declared that constitutional monarchy is a strong government because it is an intelligible government. This statement, if analysed, is rather startling. For monarchy which reigns but does not rule is not, at first sight, an easily intelligible system. The mind of the people is what the French call *simpliste*; it likes a clear, definite idea. To the simple mind, a king is a ruler, one who rules as well as reigns.

The British sovereign accepts the advice of his responsible ministers tendered through the Prime Minister. He is also consulted; and the more experience he has, the better his judgment, the more is he sure to be consulted. With at any rate one advantage over the Presidential system—the advantage of length

of tenure and continuity—the experience and judgment of the sovereign in the course of time are likely to be valuable. It would be foolish to assert that the British constitution is the best in the world. There is no single " best," for different systems suit different peoples. The British constitution is well adapted for securing the things which the British people value in public life; freedom, equality before the law, stability, and as much participation in the government of the country as seems reasonable and practicable in a large and complex modern state.

Lord Macaulay, whose essays for *The Edinburgh Review* are a well of wisdom and of splendid English writing, before he died in 1859, had become pessimistic about a " pure democracy."

> I have long been convinced (he wrote to an American friend) that institutions purely democratic must sooner or later destroy liberty or civilisation, or both. In Europe, where the population is dense, the effect of such institutions would be almost instantaneous. What happened lately in France is an example. In 1848 a pure democracy was established there. During a short time there was reason to expect a general spoliation, a national bankruptcy, a new partition of the soil, a maximum of prices, a ruinous load of taxation laid on the rich for the purpose of supporting the poor in idleness.
>
> Such a system would, in twenty years, have made France as poor and barbarous as the France of the Carlovingians. Happily the danger was averted; and now there is a despotism, a silent tribune, an enslaved press. Liberty is gone, but civilisation has been saved.
>
> I have not the smallest doubt that if we had a purely democratic Government here, the effect would be the same.[1]

The " despotism " in France to which Macaulay was alluding was that of Napoleon III. This fell in 1870 and was succeeded by the Third Republic, a parliamentary state, with a constitution not unlike the British constitution except that the head of the State is an elected President. Both France and Great Britain have a " balanced " constitution with two-chambered legislature, cabinet responsible to the legislature, Head of the State who accepts advice from the Prime Minister. The position of the constitutional King of England is rendered more than usually delicate and difficult since the Statute of Westminster of 1931, as he has to accept advice from the Prime Minister of Great Britain and independent advice from the Prime Minister of every Dominion. No wonder the French critic said that there was not *a* British constitution.

The hundred years since the succession to the throne of Queen Victoria is one of splendid achievement in Great Britain, on the Continent of Europe, in the United States. In these years Western civilisation (in which is included the United States) has been the model for humanity, and has been the medium of progress. The industrial achievement springs to the mind at once. Steam

[1] Quoted by Arthur Bryant, *Macaulay* (1932), pp. 144–45.

had been introduced into factories some thirty or forty years before the reign of Victoria, but the "Railway Age" had scarcely begun in 1837. John Ruskin has charmingly described in *Præterita* the foreign tours which as a boy or young man he made with "Papa and Mama" between 1830 and 1840. They hired "one of Mr. Telford's chariots," obtained horses at the various stages, did comfortably forty or fifty miles a day, and always finished by four o'clock in the afternoon so as to have time for dinner and for a stroll round the town. Ruskin in later life regretted the passing of the coaching days, but the millions of people who for business or leisure go over the all-pervading network of European or American railways know where their debt lies. The last hundred years is an age of railways, steamships, factories—an age of steam-power, to which by invention and gradual evolution has been added electrical power. Characteristic books of the "middle Victorian" period (between 1850 and 1870) were Samuel Smiles's *Life of George Stephenson*, the "inventor" of the locomotive, *Lives of the Engineers*—the road-makers, bridge-builders, railway-builders, lighthouse-builders, the men who enabled things to be moved and industries to be located at the most suitable points. The crown of Samuel Smiles's literary achievement was *Self-Help* (1859), expounding the virtues on which the great engineers had based their material successes. There have been many candidates for the award of "greatest benefactor" of the human race in the nineteenth century. Probably not many people now would agree with the choice (or one of the choices) of Andrew Carnegie—but their grandfathers would have agreed: Henry Bessemer, whose method of making steel was ready for patenting in 1859. The Victorian Age was—among its many splendid aspects—an age of engineers; and particularly of that beneficent class characteristically called "Civil Engineers," who have opened up the world, made it traversable and sanitary. Among the men who made communication available for all people, the steamship men should be remembered as well as the railway men. Charles Dickens was able to go to the United States from England in 1841, travelling with reasonable speed and comfort, largely because of the efforts of Samuel Cunard, whose service of Atlantic "packets" began its beneficent course in 1840. The advent of steamship travel in the hundred years between the accession of Queen Victoria and of Edward VIII. can be measured by the difference between Samuel Cunard's *Britannia* packet of 1840 and his Company's *Queen Mary* liner of 1936. That to communication by railroad and by surface steamships there would be added in the last thirty years of this period communication by submarine and airship and aeroplane was, in the reign of Queen Victoria, not much considered by the engineers; it was, however, in the mind of that delight of Victorian boyhood, Jules Verne, whose stories, as they appeared in the French press, were rapidly translated into English for *Every Boys' Annual* or *The Boy's Own Paper*. A young

Englishman, H. G. Wells, was also foreseeing strange advances in means of communication in his novels of the " eighteen-nineties."

The literary achievement of the hundred years is remarkable, though more remarkable in the first sixty years than in the last forty. The Queen herself was not a great reader (she appears to have preferred the novels of Edna Lyall, to those of the literary giants of her age), but she was a great writer of letters. *The Letters of Queen Victoria*, a magnificent series of volumes, is one of the grand collections of the world, to be put alongside of the other great collections, Cicero's *Letters*, the *Letters* of Erasmus, of Horace Walpole, of Rousseau. The Queen was tireless in maintaining the practice of this great social art of letter-writing, now seriously eclipsed by the typewriter and the telephone.

The people of the Victorian Age liked long novels and long poems. The habit of writing long novels, established in the grand succession of Fielding, Richardson, Scott, was continued by Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot, Anthony Trollope; in the United States by Hawthorne and Henry James. It is almost the only literary taste which the " Edwardians " and " Georgians " of the twentieth century share with the Victorians. Some of the novels of Arnold Bennett, Hugh Walpole, John Priestley, Theodore Dreiser are as long as any of the great Victorians; it is doubtful, however, whether they will stand the test of time as those tremendous figures of the Victorian Age, Dickens and Thackeray, have done; and as even Anthony Trollope, a lesser light, has done. Indeed the quiet humour, the mellow wisdom, the comfortable social circle of *Barchester Towers* (first published in 1857) seem to be almost as firmly established in the heart of the reading public as the justly called " Immortal " *Pickwick*.

While, however, the Victorian taste for long novels has—to some extent only—continued into the twentieth century, the taste for long poems has been lost. The pre-Victorians read with zest Scott's *Lady of the Lake* and Byron's *Childe Harold*. The Victorians continued to enjoy those long poems, and added to them, for reading in every educated household, Tennyson's *In Memoriam* (1850), his *Idylls of the King* [1859–69], Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh* (1856), and Robert Browning's *Ring and the Book* (1868). It is almost impossible now to realise that the publication of *Aurora Leigh* was regarded as a great literary event when it took place, people talking about it at the breakfast-table, in the club, at those quaint social evenings, with a little whist, a little music, sandwiches, and a lot of talk, which the Victorians loved. Not only has the taste for long poems been entirely lost now, but the taste for any sort of written poetry has enormously declined. In the twentieth century no contemporary poets were really widely and continuously read except Rudyard Kipling, all of whose poems were short; and of these only a few gems are likely to survive, if indeed the people of the future ever return to the reading

> And now we all have a new King. I wish him, and you, his people, happiness and prosperity with all my heart. God bless you all. God Save the King.

At 2 a.m., 12th December 1936, Prince Edward, created Duke of Windsor, left Portsmouth in H.M. Destroyer *Fury*, and crossed to Boulogne, on his way to Austria.

had to do without, a Mæcenas. Books were growing cheaper, circulation was increasing, there were excellent "*Reviews*"—the *Quarterly*, the *Edinburgh*, the *Athenæum*—to guide the public taste; authors made a reasonably good living and so could dispense with patronage. The "Film" has now greatly increased authors' opportunities of gain. The Victorian authors had nothing like this, though some of them did fairly well by giving public readings of their works—Dickens did this; and some did well out of the dramatisation of their works; Anthony Hope's charming "Balkan" romance, *The Prisoner of Zenda*, was a great success when staged. Stevenson's immortal *Treasure Island* did not suitably dramatise, though as a "Film" it has had a great and deserved success.

Where the Victorians were ahead of the people of the twentieth century was in having prophets and listening to them. A prophet is a person who has a message, speaks out, warns, informs, directs. He is fearless, like Elijah the Tishbite, and kings and common people listen to him. Like Isaiah he never doubts that right will triumph, and he preaches hope and confidence in circumstances that give ground only for despair. The prophet believes in justice, human nature, and progress; and he makes his hearers believe in these things.

The great Victorian prophets were Carlyle, who preached heroism; Ruskin, art; Tennyson, faith; Darwin, progress through evolution. Darwin's *Origin of Species* was published in 1859. He showed how, by natural selection, through the persistent process of Nature, continually discarding and adapting, every. living thing tended to become better and better adjusted to environment. Thus, as the world went "cycling through the ages," improvement was a continuous process, and progress was almost a law of Nature. This was the great dogma of Victorian England and of the contemporary peoples of the Continent; that progress, an increasingly prospering and improving world, a better and better humanity, was as certain as the rising of the sun. On this dogma was based the comfortable outlook, the wholesome optimism of what Matthew Arnold called the great middle class of which he was both the interpreter and the critic. The length of Queen Victoria's reign, the long mellow afternoon of her life, seemed somehow to confirm the prevailing belief in social stability, moral and material progress.

The World War shattered this dogma; and nobody now has the certainty that things are always going to proceed from better to better. The belief in progress has been lost. It was not an illusion. Things *were* becoming better and better in the Victorian Age; the war-scourge, though not suppressed, was kept strictly in control. It was the twentieth century that cried Havoc! and let slip the dogs, or rather the devil, of "unlimited" war; and that sickening experience swept from people's minds the belief in progress. From this point of view it was a new world and a new England, a new Empire, a whole new world, that George V. and his contemporaries had to face in 1919. His experience,

poise, and wisdom helped the British people through the next fifteen years to something like normality in domestic affairs. The affairs of the world outside he naturally could do little or nothing to control. And in the year of the death of the good king there were renewed shocks in Europe. Edward VIII. succeeded to the throne in a stable country but a rocking world. Italy made a violent attack on Abyssinia. The German Army marched into the Rhineland. Spain fell into ruinous, deadly civil war and chaos in the summer of 1936. And yet, as an observer wrote, when Edward VIII. took his summer holiday: "In the midst of it all our king goes quietly out in an ordinary train to the Adriatic. No wonder people cannot understand us in the least!"

It would seem that the Age of Prophets is gone; or if prophets are still heard it is the voice of Karl Marx whose Communist Manifesto appeared in 1848, or of Nietzsche, whose *Wille Zur Macht*, not completed when he died in 1900, was included in his collected works.

Yet a new prophet, with a more reasonable message, will doubtless be listened to when he appears; for the world is waiting. There is no lack of energy, skill, and courage. The crossing of Africa by Livingstone in 1852–56, Stanley's plunge into Darkest Africa in 1887, Burnaby's ride to Khwa in 1875, have all been equalled in respect of daring and endurance by the travellers and venturers of the post-War Age.

Indeed it is an age which is continually making records, continually breaking its own records. It is an efficient age, if not a particularly moral one; but morality and the spiritual life are always capable of revival. The new Wesley may be on the way. Meanwhile, those people who may feel discouraged by the burdens of the present age, who fear that the reign of Edward VIII., begun in the terrible year 1936, had not the fair opportunities of the reign of Victoria when it began in 1837, can reflect on a passage of Lord Macaulay. It is from the essay on Southey's *Colloquies on Society* and it was written in 1830. People felt then that the burdens of the age were too great to be borne.

> The present moment is one of great distress. But how small will that distress appear when we think over the history of the last forty years; a war, compared with which all other wars sink into insignificance; taxation, such as the most heavily taxed people of former times could not have conceived; a debt larger than all the public debts that ever existed in the world added together; the food of the people studiously rendered dear; the currency imprudently debased and imprudently restored. Yet is the country poorer than in 1790? We firmly believe that, in spite of all the misgovernment of her rulers, she has been almost constantly becoming richer and richer. Now and then there has been a stoppage, now and then a short retrogression; but as to the general tendency, there can be no doubt. A single breaker may recede, but the tide is evidently coming in.
>
> If we were to prophesy that in the year 1930 a population of fifty millions, better fed, clad, and lodged than the English of our time will cover these islands, that Sussex

and Huntingdonshire will be wealthier than the wealthiest parts of the West Riding of Yorkshire now are, that cultivation, rich as that of a flower garden, will be carried up to the very tops of Ben Nevis and Helvellyn, that machines constructed on principles yet undiscovered will be in every house, that there will be no highways but railroads, no travelling but by steam, that our debt, vast as it seems to us, will appear to our great-grandchildren a trifling encumbrance which might easily be paid off in a year or two, many people would think us insane. . . .

Hence it is that, though in every age everybody knows that up to his own time progressive improvement has been taking place, nobody seems to reckon on any improvement during the next generation. We cannot absolutely prove that those are in error who tell us that society has reached a turning-point, that we have seen our best days. But so said all who came before us, and with just as much apparent reason.[1]

Amid the flux of modern life and politics, one thing has remained stable: the British Constitution, not rigid but, in fact, constantly growing, traces a clear course throughout the ages. The King in Parliament is both the expression of this continuity and the pivot of the State. "The Crown remains in fact an authority charged with the final duty of preserving the essentials of the constitution." [2]

[1] The article was published in *The Edinburgh Review* for January, 1830. The passage quoted is on pp. 120–21 of the 1864 edition of the *Critical and Historical Essays*. The significance of the passage, in the light of the present condition of England, was pointed out to me by Mr L. H. Sutton of Ashridge.

[2] A. Berriedale Keith, *The King and the Imperial Crown* (1936), p. 183.

CHAPTER XV

THE END OF THE REIGN OF EDWARD VIII.

THE CRISIS OF the King's reign, which doubtless had been developing and maturing for months, burst upon the British public with astonishing, bewildering force in the first week of December 1936.

On Tuesday, 1st December, Dr Blunt, Bishop of Bradford, in an address to his Diocesan Conference, said, in the course of an address about the Coronation ceremony :

> The benefit of the King's Coronation depends, under God, upon two elements. First, on the faith, prayer, and self-dedication of the King himself, and on that it would be improper for me to say anything except to commend him, and ask you to commend him, to God's grace which he will so abundantly need, as we all need it (for the King is a man like ourselves), if he is to do his duty faithfully. We hope that he is aware of his need. Some of us wish he gave more positive signs of such awareness.

These remarks which, it seems, were not directed to any specific incident or aspect of the King's private life, acted as if they touched some spring and released some enormous mass of overwhelming force. The Bishop's address appeared in the morning newspapers on Wednesday, 2nd December ; and on Thursday, 3rd December, as if acting with one accord, the whole daily press of Great Britain, which had hitherto preserved unbroken silence on the " King's Affair," burst into outspoken comment and criticism. A political crisis of the first magnitude broke upon the British Commonwealth of Nations. It was settled in exactly eight breathless days—by the evening of Thursday, 10th December.

For six or seven months there had been rumours and gossip connecting the name of King Edward with that of Mrs Simpson, *née* Bessie Wallis Warfield, of Baltimore, U.S.A. Mrs Simpson had obtained a divorce from her first husband ; and on 27th October 1936 she obtained a decree *nisi* in the Court of Probate and Divorce from her second husband. The decree attracted no public attention and was given no prominence in the press. Indeed, the unbroken silence of all the English newspapers, without exception, regarding the " King's Affair " down to 3rd December is one of the most remarkable things in the history of the Press. There is no Press censorship, there are no Press laws in Great Britain. The suppression of all news or comment about the King and Mrs Simpson can only have been secured by good will on the part of all the journals.

On Thursday, 3rd December, the news was on every breakfast table. The first leading article of *The Times* began with the words :

> " A remarkable address by the Bishop of Bradford let loose a flood of comment yesterday. . . ."

Further :

> It is a simple fact that the American campaign of publicity, so long and so wisely ignored in this country, has now reached a point at which it goes far beyond that side of His Majesty's life which may justly be held to be private. . . ."
>
> Even a King is entitled to his relaxation and the companionship of his chosen friends. What he cannot and will not afford—and what the nation and the Empire cannot afford—is that the influence of the great office which he holds should be weakened if ever private inclination were to come into open conflict with public duty and be allowed to prevail."

Next day *The Times* spoke equally plainly. Nobody would object to the King marrying a commoner either British or American. People would welcome an American marriage which could have only a good effect on the relations of the English-speaking peoples.

> The one objection, and it is an overwhelming objection, to the marriage which His Majesty is believed to have projected is that the lady in question has already two former husbands living, from whom in succession she has obtained a divorce, on the last occasion at a recent date and in circumstances which are matters of fairly common knowledge.

The week-end (5th to 7th December) passed in great anxiety. The international situation in Europe was bad. For nearly six months the terrible civil war in Spain had been threatening ominously to divide the Powers into two hostile groups. The situation in the Dominions was obscure. The Statute of Westminster of 1931 states a little cryptically in the Preamble :

> It would be in accord with the established constitutional position of all the members of the Commonwealth in relation to one another that any alteration in the law touching the Succession to the Throne or the Royal Style and Titles shall hereafter require the assent as well of the Parliaments of all the Dominions as of the Parliament of the United Kingdom.

Besides, not all the Dominions had adopted the Statute of Westminster : neither Australia nor Canada had done so. The British Government, however, consulted the Dominions throughout the crisis. On Monday, 7th December, Mr Mackenzie King, Prime Minister of Canada, was reported in *The Times* as having declared in a speech at Ottawa that all the Dominions were in accord —that is, in accord in objecting to the proposed marriage of the King and, presumably, in accord regarding the alternative to that proposal.

For by Monday, 7th December, it had become clear to the British peoples

that there was practically only one alternative. A possible, and as many people thought natural, alternative would have been renunciation of the proposed marriage. This alternative, however, seems to have been definitely ruled out by the King. The only alternative, accordingly, was abdication. The British Government absolutely refused to introduce legislation for enabling the King to contract a " morganatic " marriage, that is a marriage (unknown to English law) which does not confer on the wife the status of the husband. Such a bill, if introduced in Parliament and carried into law would in effect be a statutory declaration or recognition of the fact that Mrs Simpson was not fitted to be Queen. The parliaments and peoples of the Commonwealth of Nations could not be asked by their Governments to enact by legislation what *The Times* called " a permanent statutory apology for the status of the lady whom the King desires to marry."

The continuance of the crisis even for a few days was shaking the throne and endangering the Empire. *The Times* printed as a sample of the correspondence which was pouring into the editor's office, the following :

> Why has this country been thrown into the utmost confusion, the Monarchy shaken, and the British Empire put to great risk ? The answer can only be because His Majesty has hitherto regarded all these consequences—unless one has to assume that he foresaw none of them—as of less importance than his desire to marry—ultimately, but not now—the still half-divorced wife of Mr. Ernest Simpson.[1]

Many correspondents pointed out that while it was true that His Majesty was being expected for the good of the country to give up the woman he loved, many thousands of British men had given up the women they loved and their lives, too, for the country, and had done so cheerfully and without complaint.

On the afternoon of Thursday, 10th December, it was known that King Edward VIII. had abdicated. The announcement was made, and the whole story of the crisis from its origin to its sudden and intense development was told by Mr Baldwin in the House of Commons. It emerged from this account that the Government had tendered no advice to the King and exercised no pressure. It had simply declined to introduce legislation to enable him to contract a " morganatic " marriage.

Mr Baldwin began his speech by reading a message from the King ; the opening words of this message were : " After long and anxious consideration, I have determined to renounce the Throne to which I succeeded on the death of my father." After reading the Act of Abdication (which included the King and his descendants) Mr Baldwin took up the narrative.

On returning to his office towards the middle of October from a two months' rest, he found " a vast volume of correspondence," mainly from British and

[1] *The Times*, 8th December, p. 16.

American subjects, all expressing perturbation and uneasiness about what was appearing in the American press. He was aware also that a divorce case, in which Mrs Simpson was concerned, was to take place in the near future. Accordingly, he determined to ask His Majesty for an interview. This took place at Fort Belvedere on 20th October (1936), the first of the interviews between the King and the Prime Minister on the question of his marriage. In these interviews the Prime Minister spoke with complete frankness, and His Majesty on no occasion took any offence. "The whole of our discussions," declared Mr Baldwin, "have been carried out, as I have said, with an increase if possible of that mutual respect and regard in which we stood."

> I reminded him of what I had often told him and his brothers in years past, and that is this: You take the British Monarchy, a unique institution. The Crown in this country through the centuries has been deprived of many of its prerogatives, but to-day, while that is true, it stands for far more than it ever has done in its history,
>
> The importance of its integrity is, beyond all question, far greater than it has ever been, being as it is not only the last link of Empire that is left, but the guarantee in this country, so long as it exists in that integrity, against many evils that have affected and afflicted other countries. There is no man in this country, to whatever party he may belong, who would not subscribe to that (Cheers). But while this feeling largely depends on the respect that has grown up in the last three generations for the Monarchy, it might not take so long, in face of the kind of criticisms to which it was being exposed, to lose that power far more rapidly than it was built up, and once lost, I doubt if anything could restore it.

After further speaking, plain and sensible, on the part of Mr Baldwin, the King said: "I am going to marry Mrs Simpson and am prepared to go." Mr Baldwin's reply was: "Sir, this is most grievous news and it is impossible for me to make any comment on that to-day."

On 25th November Mr Baldwin again saw the King, who asked him what he thought of a proposal for a "morganatic" marriage. Mr Baldwin declared that he thought Parliament would never pass such a bill. He offered to inquire further into this question. On 2nd December the King saw him again. Mr Baldwin was able to inform him: "The inquiries had gone far enough to show that neither in the Dominions nor here would there be any prospect of such legislation being accepted." This seems to have finished the affair in the King's mind. "His Majesty said he was not surprised at that answer, and he never returned to it again. . . . He behaved then as a great gentleman."

At the time of this interview, 2nd December, the crisis was opening in all its intensity, for it was on 1st December that the Bishop of Bradford unwittingly stepped into fame by referring to the King in his address to the Diocesan Conference. Eight days ended the crisis. The King's "final and definite" decision

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EDWARD VIII.

was conveyed to the Cabinet on the morning of Wednesday, 9th December. The Cabinet, meeting on the same day, passed a Minute in which they begged His Majesty to reconsider his decision. Mr Baldwin at once placed this Minute in a letter before the King. His Majesty's reply arrived on the same evening —all this happening within twelve hours; it was laconic:

> The King has received the Prime Minister's letter of the 9th December 1936, informing him of the views of the Cabinet.
>
> His Majesty has given the matter his further consideration, but regrets that he is unable to alter his decision.

"I am convinced," Mr Baldwin concluded his historic speech, "that where I failed, no one could have succeeded. His mind was made up, and those who know His Majesty, know what that means."

> We have, after all, as the guardians of democracy in this little island, to see that we do our work to maintain the integrity of that democracy and the Monarchy which, as I said at the beginning of my speech, is now the sole link of our whole Empire and the guardian of our freedom. Let us look forward, and remember our country, and the trust reposed by our country in this, the House of Commons, and let us rally behind the new King, stand behind him, help him. Let us hope that, whatever the country may have suffered by what we are passing through, it may soon be repaired, and that we may take what steps we can in trying to make a better country for all the people.[1]

The King told Mr Baldwin, in their interview of 2nd December, "that if he went, he would go with dignity." He wished to make the change as easy as possible for his ministers, for his brother, and for the Empire. "Any idea to him of what might be called a *King's Party* was abhorrent."

In the end it may be said that nothing in his kingship became him better than the manner of his leaving it. The Bill of Abdication received the Royal Assent on Friday, 11th December, and thereby the Duke of York, being next in line of succession, became King. On the same evening, His Royal Highness, Prince Edward, now a private individual, broadcast from Windsor Castle a message to the people of the Commonwealth. The voice of a tired man, speaking in a condition of strain, but clearly, distinctly, sincerely, came through the air.

> . . . . There has never been any constitutional difference. . . . between me and Parliament. Bred in the constitutional tradition by my father, I should never have allowed any such issue to arise. . . .
>
> I now quit altogether public affairs, and I lay down my burden. It may be some time before I return to my native land, but I shall always follow the fortunes of the British race and Empire with profound interest, and if at any time in the future I can be found of service to His Majesty in a private station I shall not fail.

[1] Hansard, *House of Commons Debates*, 10th December 1936.

> And now we all have a new King. I wish him, and you, his people, happiness and prosperity with all my heart. God bless you all. God Save the King.

At 2 a.m., 12th December 1936, Prince Edward, created Duke of Windsor, left Portsmouth in H.M. Destroyer *Fury*, and crossed to Boulogne, on his way to Austria.

CHAPTER XVI

GEORGE VI.

PRINCE ALBERT FREDERICK ARTHUR GEORGE, second son of King George V. and Queen Mary (at that time Duke and Duchess of York) was born at York Cottage, Sandringham, on 14th December 1895. He did not receive the title of Duke of York, traditionally attached to the second son of a reigning king, until June 1920. When, sixteen years after this, he unexpectedly succeeded to the throne on the abdication of his elder brother, it was observed that five previous Dukes of York had become King: Edward IV., Henry VIII., Charles I., and George V.

The prince was educated at home, chiefly at Sandringham, until the age of fourteen. He learned football playing with the village boys at Sandringham. In January 1909 he entered Osborne as a naval cadet. He had the usual two years' training there, and the next two years at Dartmouth. He then went to sea as a cadet, January 1913, for six months' cruising in H.M.S. *Cumberland* on the North Atlantic station. In August 1913 he was gazetted mishipman in H.M.S. *Collingwood.* An operation for appendicitis which was found to be necessary in September 1914, and some persistent gastric trouble, interfered seriously with his war-service, but he recovered in time to rejoin the *Collingwood* as sub-lieutenant, and to take part in the Battle of Jutland, 31st May 1916. Such an opportunity seldom or never occurs, for the condition of royalty necessarily precludes princes in the line of succession from going into the attack. It is naturally a legitimate source of satisfaction to the King and the British peoples that he stood where Nelson stood, and where every sailor, whatever his rank, stands, when his ship is in action. In a naval battle everything is "front-line."

In November 1917 Prince Albert transferred to the Royal Air Force, and reached the rank of captain before the War was over. Eventually (March 1919) he had the satisfaction of qualifying as an "A" Pilot. In 1919, like many thousands of young officers, the Prince, though rather older (twenty-four years) than most who took this course, "went back to school," as an undergraduate of Trinity College, Cambridge.

During the sixteen years before his accession to the Crown the public work of the Duke of York was mainly in social affairs, not so much of a ceremonial character (though he undertook a considerable share of this too) as of an industrial character. He accepted the position of President of the Industrial Welfare Society and undertook the duties actively and seriously. He also promoted

and regularly spent time with " The Duke of York's Camp," which met annually in summer. The camp is composed of 200 public school boys and 200 from the working classes.

On 26th April 1923 the Duke of York was married at Westminster Abbey to Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon, youngest daughter of the Earl and Countess of Strathmore and Kinghorne. Queen Elizabeth is the second daughter of Scotland to become the consort of the King of England, and the only one since the marriage of King Henry I. and Edith, daughter of Malcolm III. and Margaret of Scotland in 1100. Before their accession to the throne, the Duke and Duchess of York lived at 145 Piccadilly and the Royal Lodge, Windsor Forest. In December-April 1924–25 they visited Kenya, Uganda, and the Sudan, and in 1927 Australia and New Zealand. The Duke opened the Australian Commonwealth new Parliament buildings at Canberra on 9th May.

On succeeding to the throne the new King adopted the title of George VI. with the well-understood intention of linking his personality in the minds of the people with the memory of the beloved personality of King George V. " What will endear him to his people, if he be not already endeared," Mr Baldwin declared in the House of Commons on 14th December 1936, " is that more than any of his brothers he resembles in character and disposition of mind his father whose loss we were lamenting eleven short months ago."

In his first message to Parliament after accession, George VI. declared :

> I have succeeded to the throne in circumstances which are without precedent and at a moment of great personal distress, but I am resolved to do my duty, and I am sustained by the knowledge that I am supported by the widespread goodwill and sympathy of all my subjects here and throughout the world. It will be my constant endeavour, with God's help, supported as I shall be by my dear wife, to uphold the honour of the realm and to promote the happiness of my peoples.

The Times, in reporting the above declaration in the first column of the principal page of the journal, took care to print at the head of the next column the official assurance that " the King will continue the Royal Racing Stables and the Royal Breeding Stud on the same lines as his father, King George V."

Thus the astonishing English people, having settled within eight days, in an international situation of unparalleled anxiety, the greatest constitutional crisis of their history since 1688, resumed, in so far as it had been interrupted, the accustomed tenor of their life.

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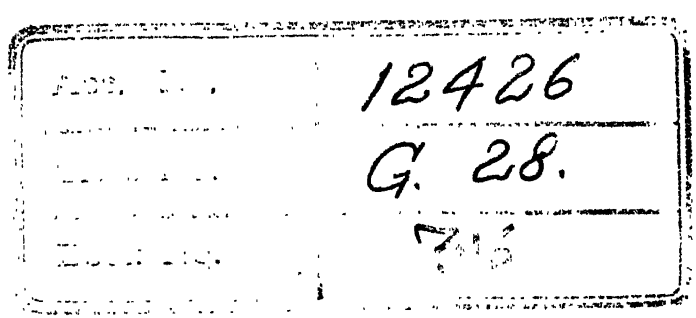
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